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THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

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THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

A Historical Interpretation
and Revaluation of the Idea
of the Second Advent

BY

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TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER
WHO FIRST TAUGHT ME THE
PLEASURE AND PROFIT OF STUDY

8999

PREFACE

Two things have been undertaken in the following pages. First the obscure origin and the slow and uncertain development of the Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian hope of a better world have been set forth. The sources of certain particular phases of the premillennial view have been indicated, but to attempt this with any approach to completeness would have required too much space.

This historical survey secures a proper basis of operations for the second part of the task, the attempt to indicate and reinterpret the fundamental social and religious values of the Christian hope of the second coming of Christ. I have long felt that large numbers of modern Christians did not properly estimate the historical influence or present importance of Premillennialism, or, to use a still more pedantic term, apocalypticism. Until a historical interpretation and revaluation of this complex of ideas is accepted in the churches they will be at a great strategic disadvantage in meeting the attacks of unbelief. The Premillennialist is tactically in a position much superior to other Christians who have a merely negative view on the subject, for he has a perfectly definite and clear-cut plan of campaign.

Large areas of biblical and subsequent Christian literature are valueless to the average churchmember, because of their strange eschatological growths and forbidding apocalyptic colorings. From these fields the Adventist and Premillennialist reap rich harvests. They will yield even more abundantly to a cultivation which does not misuse them. Experience has convinced me that only the

historical interpretation of these passages can bring out their inherent values.

The inevitable difficulties of the task must be frankly recognized. The average earnest Christian will probably find that the premillennial point of view seems simpler and more fruitful. Superficially it is so. It is easy to understand and it fits many of the facts of experience, enough to give it the appearance of plausibility. The arguments for the views herein supported may seem to some abstract and abstruse, just as the evidences used to prove that the world is round and turns upon its axis appear far-fetched to the untutored savage. The chief difficulty, however, is that the doctrines of the inspiration of the Scriptures and the divinity of Christ are involved. Naïve and unreasoned views on these subjects are the great barriers to intelligent use of the Scriptures. Lingering reminiscences of the doctrine of verbal inspiration still affect the interpretation of many who have ostensibly repudiated it. But the crucial question is the attitude of Jesus toward apocalyptic doctrine. His faith and teaching on the subject, as it may be determined by scientific historical study, determine our estimate of his character and person. The current estimates of both liberal and conservative now stand in need of revision in the light of the progress which this study has made. I have tried briefly to indicate the direction which this revision must take.

It will be plain at once to the reader that I have not written for the scholar. I have tried to present views that will stand the test of scholarly investigation, but with as little of technical language as the subject permitted. I have quoted freely from the Jewish and Christian sources, in order that the reader who does not have access to the originals or their published translations may have the basis for the views adopted plainly set forth for his own judgment. I have wished to promote independent thinking on the part of laymen and ministers as well as students. The footnotes and bibliography have been in-

tended to point the way to further study, as well as partially to acknowledge the writer's indebtedness. My thanks are due Dr. Doremus Scudder for permission to use his poem "Where is your Lord?" quoted on pp. 220 f. and to various publishers: to Messrs. Thomas Nelson and Sons for the Old Testament texts quoted in Chapters II-IV from the American Standard Version; to the Oxford University Press for quotations in Chapter V from Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament;* and to the G. H. Doran Company for the use of Moffatt's *New Translation of the New Testament* in Chapters VI-VII.

These chapters had their inception during the recent war. Most of the material was used more than once in popular lectures and has not been substantially altered. I hope it will prove to have more than war-time value. The subject at least is of perennial interest.

C. C. McCown.

Berkeley, California,
August 15, 1921.

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THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

CHAPTER I

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

I. The Crisis of Faith

THE war has brought to a crisis the fundamental differences of world view and the deep seated perplexities that were seething in men's minds before the storm broke. On the surface the world seemed to be moving toward a period of unexampled prosperity. The progress of science, discovery, and invention, the seeming advances toward the solution of industrial, social, and international differences, the spread of learning, the outward improvement of morals, the gains in political democracy, the conquests of Christian missions, all seemed to point toward the realization of that "one far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves." And then, without warning, a pistol shot in Sarajevo brought all the magnificent palace of man's fancied achievements down upon his head with a completeness of destruction that history had never before witnessed.

"If there is a God, where is he?" How many thousands have thought or uttered that question! Professor William Adams Brown reports a friend to have said, "I do not see how I can go on living. It seems as if I had lost God out of my world."[1]

Both friends and foes of Christianity said that the

[1] *Is Christianity Practicable?* (New York, 1916), p. 1.

gospel of Christ had failed. Representative of a large number is the following:

> "What Christianity has definitely failed to do, after nineteen centuries of trial, is to redeem human life from the worst of its evils. The Christianity which has failed is Christianity as it has prevailed up to date, a Christianity founded on the apotheosis of suffering and the multitude of doctrines associated therewith, . . . Christianity with its long record of failure, now definitely stamped as final by the war. . . . The war is an unmixed and unqualified evil; and there is no Christian, sanctify it as he may, now it has taken place, who would not have prevented it had he understood the temper of the nations who are engaging in it, and known how to utilize this for beneficent purposes. Inasmuch as they have displayed no such understanding and energy and ingenuity, Christians must charge themselves with definite failure to make their religion efficacious—failure, too, in the province of activity that is peculiar to them."[1]

Others made a less sweeping judgment. The British Society of Friends in an address to the public in 1914 said, "The war spells the bankruptcy of much that we too lightly call Christian. No nation, no church, no individual, can be wholly exonerated."[2] Many solaced themselves with the thought that "Christianity had not been tried," or that it was the churches that had failed. "Organized Christianity" was at fault. Dr. Charles F. Aked said,

> "Since the first, or perhaps the second century, the churches of Christ have never been true to Christ . . . The churches of Christ have not obeyed Christ because they have not believed in Him. They have been sure of the 'big battalions,' but doubtful of the Lord who was to be with them unto the end of the ages. They have ranged themselves on the side of rampant militarism,

[1] *Hibbert Journal*, vol. xiv (Jan., 1916) pp. 320 ff., Miss M. E. Robinson.

[2] Quoted in *The Pacific*, San Francisco, Sept. 16, 1914, p. 7.

blessed the war flags of the nations and urged the war-mad millions to 'fight to a finish.' In England the official representative of the national church comes to a meeting and says he is there to justify the war with Germany 'in the name of his Master and Prince of Peace'—he uses those very words. In Germany the greatest of all living theologians, from whom every preacher in the world capable of learning has learned something, denounces England as a traitor to civilization, and the clergy call to the God of battles to aid in her destruction! Joaquin Miller, contemplating such things in his day, grew fierce in his onslaught upon such lovers of Christ:

> 'Behold, this was His last command!
> Yet ye dare to cry to Christ in prayer
> With red and reeking sword in hand,
> Ye dare to do as devils dare!
> Ye liars—great and small;
> Ye cowards, cowards, cowards all!' "[1]

After drawing an exceedingly vivid picture of the horrors of the war just closed, Dr. S. D. Gordon writes,

> "Christianity *has* broken down, or, at least, something has broken down that bore that label in large capitals. Certainly there was not enough of the real article *in* Central Europe to prevent the hellish outbreak. And there wasn't enough *outside* to keep it from breaking out. The salt in common use had lost its saltiness. It didn't keep things healthful. The common conventional type of Christianity certainly has broken down. And it is a bad breakdown, too."[2]

With the majority this mood of questioning did not last long. They began almost at once to look forward to "reconstruction." Men were pathetically eager to record that the beginnings of the war in France, Russia, Germany,

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[1] Quoted from an address in the Scottish Rite Auditorium, San Francisco, Sept. 20, 1914, reported in *The Pacific*, Sept. 23, 1914, p. 6.

[2] *Quiet Talks on the Deeper Meaning of the War* (New York, 1919), p. 43.

England, and America drove people to the churches. Danger and death bred a certain exaltation of mood, a readiness to sacrifice, a turning to deeper and higher things that was hailed as a religious conversion. Under the chastening hand of war, faith was coming to its own. The soldier in the trenches showed a seriousness that discovered "the religion of the inarticulate" underneath the surface. As the war went on it was found—alas! on both sides—that it could be won only as the highest and noblest motives were called into action. Each side had to play upon these profounder feelings. The war was being fought for the sake of the world: to give it the blessings of "deutsche Kultur," to save it from English greed, French frivolity, and Slav barbarism; or to save civilization from German brutality and Prussian militarism, to make the world safe for democracy.

Almost from the beginning the heart of the world tried to rest itself from the strain of conflict and carnage by looking forward to the "new era" which should dawn when the night of wrath had passed. Just as the struggle was reaching its final climax, that staunch optimist, David Starr Jordan, wrote,

> "As the war goes on, we glimpse the dawn of a larger freedom. 'War to end war' now looks forward to the achievement of a 'clean peace' on the basis of a 'new morality' among nations, a settlement in which no selfish interests, national or personal, shall prevail, and no political or territorial advantage be gained by military invasion. Such an ending will find few precedents in history. It is the part of democracy to create precedent."[1]

The month after the armistice had been signed, Professor John Dewey published an article, which he may have had in waiting for some time, calling attention to

[1] *Democracy and World Relations* (New York, 1918), p. 3.

the futility of expecting these rosy hopes to be fulfilled. He said,

> "Seriousness, determination and constant preoccupation with the future, with what is coming next, marks the human response in war. . . . The concentration upon the future characteristic of war inevitably takes a rosy hue. . . . Every great war is to usher in a time of enduring peace; it is to see the establishment of justice, the dawn of a new era. Millennial expectations are not born in times of prosperity. In such days, the absorbing present is good enough. The millennium is the compensatory refuge of immediate distress and imminent evil. But victory generates buoyancy and buoyancy is likely to find vent in quick satisfactions. The paradise of surrounding milk and honey displaces the new order that has to be labored for. . . . With the let up of war, with the issue determined, the tension relaxes, and the immediate present regains with added force its command. Not the arduous labor of reconstruction, but the enjoyment of the present, of the gains to be snatched from using the opportunities of pleasure and profit in things as they are captures the mind."[1]

Professor Dewey disclaims the role of prophet, but enough time has elapsed to show that he predicted truly. The peace treaty has proved a complete disillusionment. Perhaps it was the best obtainable; perhaps it is a step toward the solution of international difficulties; but beginning with that fundamental phrase "open covenants openly arrived at," practically all of President Wilson's idealistic demands have been openly flouted. Mankind has not been regenerated in the blood bath of the war. Class suspicion and hatred, narrow and selfish nationalism, bitter racial animosities, even denominational jealousies, have been accentuated, if not increased, by the heat of the great conflict. The fires of suffering seem not to have purified the hearts of men, but to have embittered them.

[1] "The Post-War Mind," in *The New Republic*, Dec. 7, 1918, p. 157.

Can we suppose that we have come to the end of wars, that this war fought to end war has really succeeded in its ultimate purpose? The signs of the times hardly warrant such a hope. On the very day that the treaty was finally ratified last January, Marshal Foch warned the world that the last war had not been fought, that armaments cannot at once be discarded. Mankind is not yet ready for the reign of the Prince of peace.

In the face of the world situation, can we pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven?" Can we believe that there is any prospect that all mankind will be brought to acknowledge Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords? It would appear that the heart of man is fundamentally wrong, and that it is in need of a complete transformation. Is there any possibility that through the ordinary course of preaching the Gospel, spreading the doctrines of the righteousness of God, the love of Christ, and the duties of man to his fellow, this world can really be saved? Or must there come some cataclysmic change into the course of nature and society so as to make it possible for men to serve God and love one another? No Christian doubts that right will triumph, that God will eventually save the world. The question is, How is it to be done?

It is a very practical question. If in the long run the preaching of the Gospel is to reach only a few, if all the efforts to make its truths take hold upon society are futile, then our duty as Christians is to seek those few and worry as little as possible about society. If this present creation, physical and human, material and social, is hopeless and must be transformed before the will of God can be done on earth, then our task as Christians will be one thing. It will be quite another if we can believe that God is able to save men, and enough of them, and save them so thoroughly that, in spite of our present physical limitations, we can construct a saved society on this earth, a society in which in a true, though necessarily limited sense, the will

of God will be done, "as it is in heaven." These two contradictory views of the workings of God in his world we are to discuss in the succeeding pages.

This is a perennial problem. It is not merely the war as such that raises the question as to the faith of Christianity and civilization, but the war as the fruit of the whole of our boasted culture. A few in the nineteenth century, who were able to look beneath our showy veneer of material progress, felt the difficulty. In *Tancred* Disraeli wrote,

> "Progress to what and from whence? Amid empires shrivelled into deserts, amid the wrecks of great cities, a single column or obelisk of which nations import for the prime ornament of their mud-built capitals; amid arts forgotten, commerce annihilated, fragmentary literatures, and populations destroyed, the European talks of progress, because by an ingenious application of some scientific acquirements he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilization. . . . Amid the wreck of creeds, the crash of Empires, French revolutions and English reforms, Catholicism in agony, Protestantism in convulsions, Europe demands the keynote which none can sound. If Asia be in decay, Europe is in confusion."[1]

In thus comparing the recent and western with the ancient and eastern, Disraeli seems to have overlooked the fact that there was the same dissatisfaction in the midst of that ancient culture that he seems to regard as superior to our own, because, forsooth, it laid less emphasis on comfort. When history was young, the world was already old, and men looked back on the olden times as better than the present, bemoaning the decay and corruption of their own days and longing for relief and redemption. Our oldest records of such dissatisfaction come from Egypt two thousand years before Christ. One of the

[1] Quoted by Figgis, *Civilization at the Cross Roads*, (New York, 1912), p. 16 ff.

songs in the remarkable "Dialogue of the Misanthrope with his Soul" runs,

"To whom do I speak today?
Brothers are evil,
Friends of today are not of love.

To whom do I speak today?
Hearts are thievish,
Every man seizes his neighbor's goods.

To whom do I speak today?
The gentle man perishes,
The bold-faced goes everywhere.

To whom do I speak today?
He of the peaceful face is wretched,
The good is disregarded in every place.
. . . . . .
To whom do I speak today?
There are no righteous,
The land is left to those who do iniquity.
. . . . . .
To whom do I speak today?
Evil smites the land,
It hath no end."[1]

About the same time a priest of Heliopolis, Khekheperre-sonbu by name, wrote a similar indictment of society:

"I am meditating on the things that have happened, the events that have occurred in the land. Transformations go on, it is not like last year, one year is more burdensome than the next. . . . Righteousness is cast out; iniquity is in the midst of the council-hall. The plans of the gods are violated, their dispositions are disregarded. The land is in distress, mourning is in

[1] Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1912), pp. 193 ff.

> every place, towns and districts are in lamentation. All men alike are under wrongs; as for respect, an end is made of it. . . . The poor man has no strength to save himself from him that is stronger than he. . . ."[1]

An equally vigorous denunciation of existing conditions is found in the "Admonitions of Ipuwer," coming from the same period. But this prophet of doom also sees the possibility of reform under the glorious reign of a king who shall really shepherd his people.[2]

This alternation of hope and despair comes to us from the pages of all subsequent history. Men saw in their own times only evil, but they dreamed that the Golden Age at the happy beginning before man's fall would sometime, somehow, return.

The problem we are discussing, then, has been of compelling interest since long before the Hebrew prophets. Successive waves of concern have passed over the western world. Ages of rapid development and expansion have been too fully occupied with material things. Then have come dissatisfaction, reaction, despair. The interest felt by the general public today is partly artificial, that is, stimulated by propaganda and discussion, partly natural, the result of the perennial human dissatisfaction with the present and longing for the Golden Age. Just before the war this interest seemed to be increasing, owing to agitation within the church. The influence of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, the Northfield schools and conferences, the Los Angeles Bible Institute, and of certain outstanding evangelists and preachers has had much to do with this development. For years they have been preaching that the world was growing worse and that only the catastrophic return of Christ could save it. The war brought a tidal wave of interest, to be seen in books and pamphlets, newspaper reports, articles in periodicals, sermons, and discussions.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 200 f.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 203-216.

Since the close of the war, less attention has been given to the numerous irresponsible and often fictitious prophecies that flooded the newspapers for a time, but real interest in the subject of Christ's second coming has not abated in the least. Judging from the publication and sale of books on the subject and the meetings held in which it is discussed, serious inquiry seems even to be on the increase. The very disappointment which so many have felt at the outcome of the Peace Conference, the unsettled economic and political conditions in such large portions of the world, the uncertainty as to the future, is increasing the doubting mood which was already developing before the war.

The interest in this question is heightened by the popular alarm at the recent "scientific" prophecies that the world was to come to an end. Professor Porta may never have hinted at such an outcome of the conjunction of the planets on December 17, 1919. But when it was so reported in some newspaper, the public all over America took up the matter with more or less of alarm or amusement, depending upon the individual's world view. The resulting humorous incidents, the miners in Oklahoma who are said to have refused to work, the Ohio farmer who paid fifteen dollars for a reserved seat, the people in the Catskills who read their Bibles as never before, the negroes in Louisiana who held all day services in their church, concern us only in so far as they show how many are still expecting a cataclysmic end of our universe. In American history we have records of previous seasons of similar concern. The "dark day" of 1780, the "falling stars" of 1833,[1] the Millerite calculations of 1843 and 1844, the Mother Shipton prophecy pointing to 1881, all these have led thousands to look for the Judgment Day.

[1] Both are still used by Adventists and Premillennialists to prove the nearness of the Second Advent; see *Signs of the Times*, Mountain View, Calif., Aug. 26, 1919, p. 10, article by Varner J. Johns, "Harbingers of the Messiah."

What has the Christian to expect? It is important for us to know whether the Bible gives a real basis for the belief that God plans suddenly to wind up the affairs of this planet in a great catastrophe. If it be true that "the day of the Lord will come like a thief, when the heavens will vanish with crackling roar, the stars will be set ablaze and melt, the earth and all its works will disappear," then "what holy and pious men ought you to be in your behavior?"[1]

The question usually takes the form of inquiry into the real meaning of those portions of the Bible which seem so plainly to substantiate the contentions of Adventists and Premillennialists. Must we accept conclusions which are anti-scientific and anti-social, or must we discard the Bible, if not *in toto,* at least in large part? What is real Christianity?

The two contrasted points of view from which this whole complex of ideas—the end of the world, the coming of the millennium, the transformation of society—is viewed should be carefully differentiated. The one view is evolutionary and naturalistic, the other catastrophic and supernaturalistic. The first holds that in the course of social evolution evil will gradually be overcome and more and more righteousness will come to prevail in society; the second that only by an intervention from without, a divine interposition into the affairs of men which shall miraculously alter present conditions and laws of life, is it possible for the world to become better. The incompatibility of these two points of view is plain. Where do our modern social and religious bodies and movements stand?

II. The Evolutionary Point of View

Too often propaganda adopts scriptural language to cover up its real nature. For example, Dr. Anna Kings-

[1] II Pt. 3:10, 11.

ford said before the National Association of Spiritualists in England in 1917,

> "Of what avail will Spiritualism prove to ourselves or to the age unless it make the world purer, sweeter, more just and more godly? Wherefore, I at least, as one Spiritualist among many will be instant in season and out of season, with voice, pen and desire, to hasten the advent of the kingdom of God, and the age of the 'new heavens and new earth in which justice dwelleth.' "[1]

The British vegetarian society called the "Order of the Golden Age" aims to promote a bloodless diet, for philanthropic, ethical, humane, and hygienic reasons, and "to proclaim and hasten the coming of a Golden Age, when Health, Humaneness, Peace, and Spirituality shall prevail upon Earth."[2] Similarly Theosophy has developed its own doctrine of the coming of the better age, based upon its peculiar view of the evolution of the "seven races" of mankind. According to Mrs. Besant we may now be expecting the advent of the great teacher, the successor of Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed, who will develop a new race, superior to any that have gone before.[3]

These proclamations of a modified millenarianism are cited, not for their intrinsic value, but as illustrations of the universal appeal of the hope of a better age and the common adoption of its language. As the Persian longed for the coming of Saoshyant, the Hindu for Kalki, the Mohammedan for the Mahdi, and the ancient Greek and Roman for the return of the Golden Age, so men are still hoping and praying and working for the coming of a new

[1] *Herald of the Golden Age*, etc., XIX 8 (Oct., 1917), pp. 188 ff. Dr. Kingsford was the "first president of the British Theosophical Society."

[2] See its organ, *The Herald of the Golden Age and British Health Review*, edited by Sidney H. Beard.

[3] Her ideas were developed in *The Changing World*, London, 1910, and in subsequent numbers of the *Theosophist*. See Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India* (New York, 1915), pp. 274-277.

era of peace and happiness. It seems to be the tendency of these new movements to express themselves in terms of this universal, age-long hope. But their methods and ideals have nothing of the urge of the judgment day behind them. Think right, eat vegetables, or learn to communicate with the spirit world, and all will come out right in the end. Such movements and programs have little connection with the coming of the kingdom of God.

A whole series of self-deluded fanatics or scheming impostors have preached that the second coming had already taken place—in them or in some contemporary. From the days of the pseudo-messiahs of New Testament times down to Pastor Russell, there have always been numerous believers for every such vagary. Antoinette Bourignon on the Continent, Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, in England and America, Mirza Ali Mohammed and Baha Ullah, founders of Bahaism, Sri Krishna Murti Ayer among Theosophists, Cyrus R. Teed, and others who have claimed to be Christ come a second time, show how credulous the human race can be. Pastor Russell was the most successful of recent exponents of such a theory, largely, perhaps, because he made it less personal. Despite the failure of his prophecies concerning the war and the partial suppression of his propaganda by the Government, Rutherford, his successor, seems still to be continuing the imposition. All these are to be classed as evolutionary rather than supernaturalistic, for they look for no catastrophic announcement of the second advent, but rather think of the reappearance of the spiritual Christ in human flesh. They are hardly worth discussing, however, for events have long ago proved their foolishness.

The doctrine commonly called Postmillennialism is, strictly understood, both evolutionary and supernaturalistic, and has to meet a double set of objections. It holds that the preaching of the Gospel under the influence of God's Spirit will gradually convert the world and leaven society. Thus the kingdom of God, in other words the

millennium figuratively understood, is gradually coming to earth. When this process has gone on until all men have had a full chance to know and believe the Gospel, Christ will come and the judgment take place. This final coming is more or less realistically conceived according to the individual's taste, and there may be very little of the supernaturalistic in the doctrine. In any case the kingdom is to come by gradual evolution, not by miraculous intervention from without. There is little expectation of any immediate end of the processes of grace, for it is recognized that the world is as yet far from realizing the will of God on earth or good will among men. But the leaven is spreading. The world is growing better, not worse, and the whole creation is moving toward its goal in God.

The sociologist also looks for the coming of a better world by an evolutionary process. Professor Lester F. Ward's "famous series of social means and ends" closes with "dynamic action," "progress," and "happiness."[1] Professor Stein of Bern says,

> "The veil is gradually lifting from the meaning of history. The meaning is and can be nothing else than the progressive ennobling of the human type, the upbuilding of the human species into social persons, the final subjugation of the *bête humaine* through social institutions in the realm of law and custom, of religion and morality, of art and science."[2]

In his eighty-ninth year, after an exceedingly active and productive life, Alfred Russel Wallace combines a sweeping criticism of the evils of our present social system with a firm faith in the possibility of its complete reformation. He writes,

> "Taking account of these various groups of undoubted facts, many of which are so gross, so terrible, that they

[1] See Small, *General Sociology* (Chicago, 1905), p. 614; Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, vol. ii. p. 108.

[2] *An der Wende des Jahrhunderts*, p. 441, quoted with full approval by Small, *op. cit.*, p. 707.

> cannot be overstated, it is not too much to say that our whole system of society is rotten from top to bottom, and the Social Environment as a whole, in relation to our possibilities and our claims, is the worst that the world has ever seen. . . . We have been doing wrong for the past century, and we have reaped, and are reaping 'misery and destruction.' . . . We have ourselves created an immoral or unmoral social environment. To undo its inevitable results we must reverse our course. . . . In this way only can we hope to change our existing immoral environment into a moral one, and initiate a new era of Moral-Progress. . . . The well-established laws of evolution as they really apply to mankind are all favorable to the advance of true civilization and of morality."[1]

This attitude may be taken as typical of modern science. No matter how bad the world is, it will eventually improve. The idea of evolution has taken such a firm hold upon the thinking of all those who devote themselves to either physical or social sciences that they never once dream of the world's coming to an end until society has gone on to develop into higher and higher forms. They may recognize the possibility of a sudden, final catastrophe by which our world shall cease to harbor life upon it, but after studying the process by which through countless millions of years the earth has come to be what it is, their minds are predisposed to think of the future in terms of further countless millenniums of development. The astronomers who were approached by newspaper correspondents regarding the catastrophe expected on December 17 apologized for even discussing the matter. "All pure nonsense," was their verdict. There is but one thing ahead, the progressive evolution of human society.

Liberal theology is likewise evolutionary in its point of view. As it looks back upon history it sees the human

[1] *Social Environment and Moral Progress* (New York, 1913), pp. 169, 173 f.

race in process of development under the divinely constituted laws of the universe. As the physical universe evolved out of chaos through countless millions of years, not six days, so man has gradually evolved out of primitive bestiality and ignorance, instead of falling from a primitive state of purity and reasonableness. A "progressive revelation" has kept step with his intellectual, moral, and religious progress, or, to put it more accurately, experience has slowly taught him new truths about himself, the universe, and God, truths which he has registered in his social customs, his moral codes, and his religious doctrines. And so he is to grow on indefinitely. In spite of all its lapses, the world is not growing worse but better, all history being witness thereto. Some have gone so far as to maintain that God himself is evolving into a more perfect deity.

Where does "social Christianity" stand? Within the last two decades nearly all the leading denominations have taken official action expressing themselves on various social wrongs. No doubt those who believe the world is growing worse might decry the evils of society—as they usually do very vociferously—and urge the adoption of Christian principles in industrial and commercial relations. But no one will deny that the vast majority of Christians who have subscribed to the "social creeds of the churches," those who have contributed to institutional churches and social settlements, and those who have engaged in the multifarious reform movements of the last century, have believed they were hastening the coming of the kingdom by making the earth and human society a place where God's will could be realized. Social Christianity, usually, if not always, expects the coming of the reign of God by evolution, not by catastrophe.

Likewise the missionary impulse is largely due to the hope that the world may eventually be won to Christ. There are, to be sure, a few who go out to foreign lands to preach the Gospel "for a witness" only, hoping to save

some brands from the burning; but certainly the vast majority go to disciple all nations, moved by humanitarian principles as much as by evangelical dogma. The following evolutionary reinterpretation of certain apocalyptic motifs from Dr. Charles H. Robinson, editorial secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, significantly illustrates the attitude of most missionaries:

> "Never before in the history of the world has it been as literally true as it is at the present moment that there is 'upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking for those things which are coming upon the earth.' If in the events which are happening around us today we see a partial fulfilment of our Lord's prophecy, we can also appropriate to ourselves His words of encouragement, 'When these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh.' We are bold to believe that the war which now desolates the earth will be the prelude to a development of Christian Missions and an expansion of the Kingdom of God upon earth that will challenge comparison with any which occurred in the apostolic age or any subsequent epoch. . . . Modern history will date from 1914."[1]

The missionary's point of view is thoroughly hopeful. The world is growing better and he solaces himself in whatever privations and hardships fall to his lot with the faith that he is bringing nearer the reign of Christ over the nations.

III. Supernaturalistic Solutions

A very considerable number of excellent Christian people believes that the theories which we have just sketched are all equally unscriptural and false to the facts of history. They hold that the world is not growing better, but

[1] Article in *Constructive Quarterly*, vol. IV (1916), p. 487, 497, "After the War, What?"

worse. The Bible teaches that God has no intention of saving it by an evolutionary process, but that, at a time which he has appointed, he will step in and cut across the course of human events as completely as in the story of the Flood and start the world off on a new career. We may justly refer to these as supernaturalistic solutions of the problem of faith. In matters of detail this kind of theory presents even a greater variety than the evolutionary. Many who adopt this point of view are still within the evangelical denominations. Other groups have formed denominations of their own. For distinction's sake we may call the former Premillennialists, the latter Adventists. It is not the present purpose to describe their views in detail, but merely to point out their salient features.

The Seventh-Day Adventists, as perhaps the best known, may be selected as typical of all Adventists. Quotations from recent writers will illustrate their attitude.

> "A few years ago churchmen taught a future 'church triumphant' by means of the evangelization of the world. From pulpit and press, the twentieth century was heralded as the dawn of perpetual peace and goodwill. The 'brotherhood of man,' they said, would soon transform this world into a land of fellowship and enlightenment. But the blind millennial ideas of a few years ago have given way to dread of the future.
>
> "Culture and civilization were unmasked during the dark days of the past five years, showing the wickedness and corruption in the hearts of men. Imperialism has been defeated only to be succeeded by Bolshevism. A riot of revolution, anarchy, famine, pestilence, and other evils still demonstrates that peace is to be found only in righteousness. There is absolutely nc hope for the future except in the coming of the King triumphant. The world is rushing to its doom. Everywhere the elements of destruction are seen. . . . The widespread doctrine that in the last days the world will be converted and a millennium of righteousness established on the earth is a delusion. It is unscriptural and therefore untrue. The

earth has almost reached the bed rock of wickedness. The deluge of wickedness in antedeluvian days led to the deluge of water; and the flood of sin in the world that now is, will lead to a deluge of the wrath of God."[1]

"Permanent peace cannot come until the Prince of peace establishes the eternal kingdom in which righteousness holds sway. . . . A league of nations is the best humanly devised plan; but laudable as it is, such a league will not insure against all future war. . . . Only the God of heaven can blot out evil and its hideous train of followers."[2]

Another writer quotes "A Declaration of Principles for Christian Civic World Reconstruction," distributed by the National Reform Association, to the effect that

"Jesus Christ is King of the nations. His law is the rightful law of their existence. Their governments are under his authority.

Civil government is a divine institution, grounded in the nature of man, . . . and a principal agency for . . . the establishment of the divine kingdom on earth."

After arguing that Jesus is not now recognized as king nor is his law obeyed as the "Declaration" claims, this writer concludes,

"To found our hope upon any plan of civic righteousness is to build our house 'upon the sand,' but not to repose confidence in the flesh, to look only to Jesus, is to build our house 'upon the rock.' This is the secret of true reconstruction. May it be, that in the day of God's wrath, which will soon break upon the world, we shall be found to have got hold of that which will permanently endure, and not that which will ingloriously be swept away."[3]

[1] *Signs of the Times*, Mountain View, Calif., Sept. 2, 1919, p. 4, article by Varner J. Johns, "Harbingers of the Messiah."

[2] *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1919, p. 4.

[3] William G. Wirth, "Reconstruction by Civic Righteousness," *ibid.*, Aug. 12, 1919, pp. 1, 2, 12. Similar articles may be found in almost every number of the periodical.

It is quite clear that the Seventh-Day Adventist believes that the world is growing worse and is rapidly nearing an abyss of wickedness from which only a cataclysmic destruction can rescue it. Not evolution, but retrogression describes the course of human history. All our efforts at social amelioration and reform are, at best, "laudable" only in so far as they save a few individuals, who are thus prepared for the great catastrophe which is impending. After the cataclysm Christ will reign in a renewed and transformed world. He reigns now only in the hearts of a few believers.

The beliefs of militant Premillennialism may best be stated by its own representatives. In 1918 a "Bible Conference" was called by a group which included R. A. Torrey, W. E. Blackstone, Charles A. Blanchard, L. W. Munhall, Courtland Meyers, D. H. Stearns, Paul Rader, J. Wilbur Chapman, W. H. Griffiths Thomas, C. G. Trumbull, Mark A. Matthews, C. I. Scofield, Len G. Broughten, and W. B. Riley. The announcement included the following statement of faith which was signed by the Christian leaders above mentioned:

> "We believe that the Bible is the inerrant, one and final Word of God; and, therefore, our only authority.
>
> We believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; that he is very God.
>
> We believe that our Lord's prophetic Word is at this moment finding remarkable fulfilment; and that it does indicate the nearness of the close of this age, and of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> We believe that the completed church will be translated to be forever with the Lord.
>
> We believe that there will be a gathering of Israel to her land in unbelief, and she will afterward be converted by the appearance of Christ on her behalf.
>
> We believe that all human schemes of reconstruction must be subsidiary to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, because all nations will be subject to his rule.
>
> We believe that under the reign of Christ there will

be a further great effusion of the Holy Spirit on all flesh.

We believe that the truths embodied in this statement are of the utmost practical importance in determining Christian character and action with reference to the pressing problems of the hour."[1]

This pronouncement was suggested by a similar call which had been issued a few months before by a group of English clergymen including G. Campbell Morgan, A. C. Dixon, J. Stuart Holden, F. B. Meyer, and Prebendary Webb-Peploe. The American manifesto practically copied the English premillennial creed, except for the addition of the first two points, which no doubt the English Premillennialists fully accept, and a somewhat fuller statement of the third. We have in this platform, then, practically a consensus of opinion representing an active group to be found in almost every evangelical church in England, the United States, and Canada. What are its practical implications?

The plain inference from these statements is that wars, leagues of nations, and all social endeavors are at best of subsidiary importance. The year before the war began Dr. Torrey wrote in his *Return of the Lord Jesus,*

"The writer of this book is an optimist. He is absolutely sure that a golden age is swiftly coming to this earth. But he is not a blind optimist. . . . His eyes are wide open to the awful injustices that rule in human society as at present constituted. He is fully aware that there is a storm coming. He does not question that we are facing the wildest, fiercest, most appalling storm this world has ever passed through, but the storm will be brief and beyond the storm there is a golden day, such as philosophers and poets never dreamed of. The writer is an optimist because he has deeply pondered and believes with his whole heart what the Bible teaches concerning the Second Coming of Christ. If he did not believe that, he could not but be a pessimist,

[1] Quoted from *The Christian Work*, May 25, 1918, p. 616. The conference met at Philadelphia in June.

knowing what he does of social conditions and the trend of human society today. In the Return of our Lord is the perfect solution, and the only solution, of the political and social and commercial problems that now vex us."[1]

"At the present time, the multiplied iniquities of our day, the apostasy into damning error and unbelief of many professed and hitherto apparently sincere Christians, and of many professedly evangelical preachers, and of numerous professors of theology in seminaries built at great sacrifice by orthodox men and women for the promulgation of truth and not for the breeding of error, the increase of lawlessness on the part of the great corporations on the one hand and on the part of the oppressed poor on the other, the mutterings preceding the storm of wild anarchy that seems likely soon to break, all these things are signs of His coming, which may be very near at hand. . . . The darker the day grows, the nearer at hand is the dawn, and just at the moment when things seem unendurable, the brightest, gladdest day the earth ever saw is breaking."[2]

J. Stuart Holden believes the war has proved the truth of the premillennial philosophy of history. He says,

"War has come to many as the flat contradiction of their theories and hopes that the world was getting better, that the Spirit of God was in some way laying hold of civilizations and governments, and that the Kingdom of God was already being set up by human hands and was coming by observation. And yet there are still those who hold to such ideas with pathetic obsession. In earlier days they pointed to the growth of international amity, the development of social conscience, and the permeation of universal concerns by the principles of righteousness, as affording strong justification for the belief that the world would grow better and better under the influences of the Church's work, until finally Christ should come back to reign over a people altogether prepared for His rule. How this contention can still be

[1] Pp. 7 f.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 108 f.

maintained passes my comprehension. War, that great revealer of nations, has come in its most hideous forms to demonstrate the falsity of assumptions which never found support in the word of God."[1]

Dr. S. D. Gordon "calls to mind the keen lines" of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,* as expressing his own judgment of human progress:

"Here is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom, and the Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption—barbarism at last.
And History with all her volumes vast
Hath but one page!"[2]

In the premillennial view, then, what was the significance of the war just ended? Dr. Gordon may be taken as expressing the consensus of opinion. He says in his recent *Quiet Talks on the Deeper Meaning of the War and its Relation to Our Lord's Return,*

"This then is the first part of the answer as to the significance of the war. It was Satan's latest attempt to work out his unholy ambition on the earth. This is fundamental. It strikes at the very root. But it does not cover all the ground. . . .

"The Book . . . says repeatedly that the return of Christ will be *preceded by a crisis.* . . . And this gives the clue to the further significance of this upheaval. The characteristics of the whole run of time from Christ's utterance up to this terrific climax, are clearly stated. Wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, false religious teachers, defection in the Church—these have been common to every generation.

"This war has witnessed the fiercest intensifying of some of these characteristics since Christ talked of them on Olivet. . . . The very stupendousness of it naturally suggests a working up toward a climax. This seems to give *the second part* of the answer as to the war's sig-

[1] *Will The Christ Return?* (New York, 1918), pp. 16 f.
[2] *Quiet Talks on the Deeper Meaning of the War,* p. 81.

nificance. It seems like a stiffened index finger pointing straight toward such a crisis as the Book says goes before the return of Christ, and the consequent change in the order of things. . . .

"And, I want to say very thoughtfully this, a venturesome thing to risk one's judgment upon, this: it is *a working possibility that this will occur in our generation.* . . . I might say a working probability. I do say that to myself."[1]

To the Premillennialist the war, then, is not a great victory of the forces of idealism and democracy over a materialistic theory of social evolution and a reactionary autocracy. It does not mark a step forward in the history of nations. The revolutions in Russia, Germany, and Austria are not three great strides forward in the overthrow of despotism and the enthronement of the people. It is not a triumph of international law, international honesty, and civilization over Machiavellian diplomacy and ruthless barbarism. Its real significance is that the world is growing worse. "It is the world's greatest crisis pointing to a yet greater."[2] Is it an injustice to the English and American signers of the manifestos we have named to say that their words seem to imply that it was useless to spend treasure and blood to win the war?

What of the League of Nations? "All human schemes of reconstruction must be subsidiary to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, because all nations will be subject to his rule. . . . The truths embodied in this statement are of the utmost practical importance in determining Christian character and action with reference to the pressing problems of the hour." Have we any duty then with regard to the League of Nations? As one of the signs of the final "crisis" Dr. Gordon mentions a coalition of European or world powers as "the world situation." That is one thing that "can be stated positively." He continues,

[1] Pp. 62, 66 f., 69.
[2] Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

"There's a *second thing* that is quite clear to everybody. There will be a new map of Europe at the signing of the peace treaty, the technical end of the war. There will be a wholly new world situation. *And* it is a possibility that that new world situation *may* shift, gradually and yet swiftly, *into* that five-featured world situation of the crisis, the transition crisis that goes before the return of Christ and the new order of things."[1]

"This is one most striking thing. It awes the student of God's Word. The spirit of coalition among the nations was never so strong nor so near some sort of realization. The world situation seen in the Bible at the crisis time is not a coalition of *all* nations. It is simply a ten-kingdomed coalition or confederacy, later an eight-kingdomed, and it centers in Europe and at the Mediterranean."[2]

Likewise Dr. C. I. Schofield says that no peace will come as a result of the great war. The League of Nations seems to be the federated world-empire headed by the little horn of Daniel, the man of sin of Paul, the beast out of the sea of Revelation.[3]

In other words, the spread of international amity, the elimination of causes of international jealousy, and the development of the machinery for promoting universal goodwill have no value in realizing the will of God or the message of a Gospel of love, but are merely signs of the coming catastrophe by which alone God can come to reign in the world.

The manifestos containing the words we have repeated above were both issued at a time when men were beginning to look forward to the period of reconstruction following the war. Are they not clearly intended to say that no reconstruction of any fundamental and permanent value can be achieved? Premillennialists are fully agreed on these points: The war and the social wrongs and unrest every-

[1] *Quiet Talks on the Deeper Meaning of the War*, pp. 68 f.
[2] *Op. cit.*, 273 f., cp. pp. 82, 218, 260, 271-274.
[3] *What Do the Prophets Say?* p. 18 f.

where in evidence are signs of the evil times that must immediately precede the great turn in the affairs of the world when Christ shall return. The world is destined to grow worse and worse and even the efforts which may be made to prevent wars and other great social evils are merely proofs that we are nearing the limit of human ingenuity and that God must soon intervene and by a great catastrophe punish and destroy the evil in the world and miraculously make it over into the millennial realm which the returned Christ shall rule.

IV. The Study of Eschatology

We have mentioned the growth of popular interest in the second advent before the war. This was equalled, if not surpassed, by the attention paid by historical students of Christian origins to the problem of eschatology, the question as to the end of the world and what should follow it. In the winter of 1913-14 a qualified observer wrote,

> "The eschatological question, if not the most difficult and disturbing, is at any rate the most living issue in New Testament criticism and at the present time attracts more general interest than any other subject connected with biblical studies."[1]

The reasons for this interest were various. First of all the discovery of much new material and the study and reinterpretation of old bearing upon the Jewish beliefs as to the coming of the kingdom have placed in the student's hands the means for an entirely new understanding of the teachings of the Old and New Testament on the subject.[2] In the second place, the subject was forced to the fore-

[1] Maurice Jones, *The New Testament in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1914), p. 87.

[2] Especially the numerous editions from the hand of Dr. R. H. Charles, culminating in his *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 2 vols., Oxford, 1913. Also his *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian*, London, 1899. See his monumental commentary in the International Critical series (New York, 1920). Rendell Harris, M. R. James, and W. O. E. Oesterley, among others, deserve mention.

front by the revolt of certain German students of the life of Christ against the superficial, inadequate, and unhistorical modernization of the figure of Jesus which had become the fashion in certain German "liberal" circles. An effort to get back to the real Jesus and interpret him in his historical *milieu* immediately raised the question as to what he meant by his references to his own future and the coming of the kingdom of God.

The liberal portrait of Jesus had achieved a wide vogue. There was a scholarly consensus of opinion as to the main outlines of Jesus' life. The attempt to answer the eschatological question issued in two contradictory conclusions. Wrede declared that Jesus never regarded himself as the messiah; the references to his place in the kingdom had been read back into his teaching by the apostles, who after his death came to the view announced in the gospels. Jesus, was only a pre-eminent Jewish prophet, who died for his fidelity to his message.[1]

Schweitzer came to just the opposite conclusion: Jesus' belief that he was the messiah and messiah in the transcendental, supernaturalistic sense, was the center of his conduct, the key to unlock the mystery of his life and death. The language Jesus used is not to be toned down or explained away. He meant what he said and died in the full faith that he would shortly return on the clouds of heaven, believing that by going through this great "affliction" he was making it possible for the kingdom to come.[2]

[1] Wilhelm Wrede (1859-1906, professor of evangelical theology in Breslau from 1893), *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien.* Göttingen, 1901.

[2] Albert Schweitzer, *Mystery of the Kingdom: The Secret of Jesus' Messiahship and Passion.* Translated with an Introduction by Walter Lowrie, New York, 1914; *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede.* Translated by W. Montgomery, with a preface by F. C. Burkitt. London, 1910. Born 1875, became Privat-Dozent in New Testament studies at the University of Strassburg in 1902. Later studied medicine; in 1913 went to the Congo as a medical missionary, referring to his work as "practical eschatology."

Wrede's method carried almost to the limit the liberal principle of eliminating from the records what appears to the modern investigator inconsistent or out of place.[1] Schweitzer, on the contrary, claims to conserve practically all the synoptic gospels, to read little or nothing between the lines, and to accept the plain meaning of the evangelists' language as interpreted by contemporary history and literature. Wrede's *Messianic Secret* (*Messiasgeheimnis*), which appeared on the same day as Schweitzer's *Mystery of the Kingdom* (*Das Messianitäts-und Leidensgeheimnis*), made few converts. Quite naturally some "liberals" were ready to follow their accepted principles a step farther. But the great majority of New Testament scholars had been prepared by familiarity with Jewish apocalyptic literature to be deeply influenced by Schweitzer, whose learning, brilliance, and evident piety could not but make a profound impression.

An illustration of this impression and its serious import is the last work of the talented Irish Modernist, Father Tyrrell, the manuscript of which lay open on his desk and hardly finished when he laid down his facile pen forever. The very title, *Christianity at the Cross Roads*,[2] shows how deeply the eminent Catholic, true to the last to the "idea" of the church which had disowned him, felt the significance of the eschatological question. It involved the whole Christian view of the universe. Are life and history and society the products of a purely mechanical evolution, which God may or may not have started, or may we still believe in the supernatural? Is God only a potency imminent in a pantheistic sense, or is he also a transcendant being, a real personality, who in some fashion comes into communion with man and affects man's feeling and doing? If the latter, how is he working in the world and

[1] Only Drews and the other proponents of the Christ-myth theory have gone farther.

[2] London, 1910.

what will be the outcome? Christianity, in facing the eschatological question, is at the cross roads.

Where are we to class Jesus? Christianity cannot be maintained on the foundation of a Christ who is merely an "idea," despite much specious reasoning to prove that the historical Jesus is of no importance. But the Jesus of history was a Jew, and after Schweitzer no one can study him and ignore the eschatological materials in the gospels. Jesus said, "Ye shall all see the Son of man . . . coming on the clouds of heaven." What manner of man was Jesus? When and how is he coming? May we talk of social teachings of Jesus, or were his ethical standards only intended to apply to a brief interval before the new kingdom should break upon the world out of the skies? Was his death merely a sacrifice to his mistaken idea of his messiahship, or has it some real value in saving man and society? Was Jesus merely a mistaken enthusiast, or have his teachings on questions of eschatology to be taken as they stand? In other words, does Schweitzer really drive us either to reject Jesus as Lord and Master, or to accept his eschatological program as the Premillennialist interprets it? Every question, theoretical and practical, with which modern Christianity is concerned must be answered according to our understanding of Jesus' messiahship and second coming. How are we to interpret it?

The path toward a solution must lie through historical study. We cannot interpret the gospels without a knowledge of Greek. Much more we cannot interpret Jesus without a knowledge of the thought world of the people to whom he spoke. As the history of the United States would be a riddle to one who knew nothing of the War of Independence, so the Jews are a riddle to one who knows nothing of their national hope. It is to the study of this, then, that we turn as manifestly the first step toward a solution of the problem of the coming of the Kingdom and

the King. As we follow it through the centuries we shall find our way to firmer ground for the understanding and appreciation of Jesus and his message.

CHAPTER II

THE DAY OF YAHWEH

I. The Foundation of the Hebrew National Hope

THE hope of the early Hebrews centered around the "Day of Jehovah," or Yahweh,[1] the Hebrew equivalent of the second coming and the day of judgment. Its earliest mention in their literature is found in Amos. Although the first of the long line of Hebrew prophets whose addresses have been preserved, he is evidently using a term that is already quite familiar to his hearers. He says,

> "Woe unto you that desire the day of Yahweh! Wherefore would ye have the day of Yahweh? It is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Yahweh be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?
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> "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come! . . . ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near."[2]

He can even speak of "that day" as perfectly well known, where nothing in the context explains it.[3]

[1] The word "Jehovah" is a hybrid, arising from a misunderstanding. The word "Yahweh," which more nearly corresponds to the original Hebrew name, is preferable; cp. Badè, *The Old Testament in the Light of Today* (Boston, 1915), pp. 313 f.

[2] Amos 5:18 ff.; 6:1, 3.

[3] Amos 2:16; 8:9, 13.

From Amos' words it is plain that the people he was addressing had a definite conception of what the day of Yahweh would mean to them. Some of them, probably the great majority, thought "that day" would mean glory to Israel, and desired that it might come as speedily as possible. Others, possibly half convinced by Amos or his predecessors, that it would mean darkness and not light, persuaded themselves that that day was as yet far off, and at present they had nothing to fear.[1]

The tone and content of the teachings of Amos and of all his successors make it plain that the prophetic conception of the day of Yahweh was quite at variance with that of the people.[2] The outcome of this conflict of ideas was eventually handed down to Jesus and his disciples, and upon it the Christian hope of the kingdom of God is based. Therefore, before attempting to interpret the prophetic conception, or the Jewish and Christian ideals which grew out of it, we must notice the views which we find already occupying the minds of the people when Amos began to preach. We are working somewhat in the dark because of the lack of direct evidence; yet the course of early Hebrew religious development is sufficiently clear to give us all we need—the broad outlines of the foundation of that national hope which was all-important for the later edifice of Hebrew thinking.

The Hebrew's fundamental assumption was Yahweh's loving care for his people. According to the popular belief in the times of the "judges" and the early monarchy, Israel was the chosen people of Yahweh. Deborah sings "praise to Yahweh, the God of Israel," for "the righteous

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[1] Note another attitude in Is. 5:18 f.

[2] See Harper, "International Critical Commentary," *Amos and Hosea* (New York, 1905), pp. cx-cxx and on Amos 5:18; Marti, *Dodekapropheton* (Tübingen, 1904), ad loc., and *Geschichte der israel. Religion*, 4th ed., pp. 180-186, 5th ed., 1907, pp. 200-206. As it appears to me, Oesterley, *Evolution of the Messianic Idea* (New York, 1908), pp. 241-248, goes too far in contrasting the popular and the prophetic point of view.

acts of his rule in Israel," when "the people of Yahweh went down to the gates."[1] The earliest Hebrew traditions tell how God had chosen Abraham and made a covenant with him. He had saved the patriarch's descendants from Egypt; he had led them through the wilderness; had given them a place in Canaan—to the desert nomad a "land flowing with milk and honey," and, finally, he had delivered them from their once more powerful neighbors, and had made them for a time the greatest nation within their political horizon. Their traditions, as narrated by the first historians whose work is preserved, those of the ninth and eighth centuries,[2] exhibit the completest confidence in Yahweh's power and in his love for the people whom he had chosen; and, therefore, in the continued prosperity of the nation; for how could Yahweh vindicate himself and his choice, except by making them more powerful and glorious?[3]

While the power and prestige of Israel had suffered grievously in the generations following the division of the kingdom, just before Amos' time there had come the Indian summer of her glory, when very much of her former wealth and prosperity had been restored under the fortunate reigns of Jeroboam II in the northern kingdom and Uzziah in Judah. Hosea and Amos, dissatisfied as they were with social conditions in Israel, had no doubt that their people had been the special favorite of Yahweh. They hear Yahweh say,

> "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. . . . I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms."[4]

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[1] Jud. 5:3, 5, 11. See Badè, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 ff.

[2] The so-called J and E documents; see Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, new ed., pp. 116-126; Gray, *Critical Introduction to the Old Testament* (London, 1913), pp. 37 f.

[3] Cp. H. P. Smith, *Religion of Israel* (New York, 1914), p. 44.

[4] Hos. 11:1-3.

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth."[1]

The closing section of the "Book of the Covenant" accurately expresses the popular trust. Yahweh says in the ear of Israel,

"If thou shalt indeed . . . do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine angel shall go before thee."[2]

Yahweh's choice involved Israel's mission. The modern missionary spirit, one of the noblest expressions of Christian altruism, finds a startling parallel, if not its origin, in a feeling that seems to have been common to all Israel's neighbors, the conviction that each nation was bound to

"extend the influence of its own particular god to the farthest possible limit, . . . hence wars of conquest, which were at the same time religious wars, were of unceasing occurrence. . . . Every (Assyrian) king in every campaign declares himself to have been incited, emboldened and prospered by his nation's gods. . . . Esarhaddon, for example, well expresses the animating spirit of Assyrian warfare thus: 'The names of the great gods they invoked together and trusted in their power. I, however, trusted in Ashur, my lord, and like a bird out of the mountains I captured him and cut off his head. *In order to exhibit the might of Ashur, my lord, before the eyes of the peoples,* I hung the heads of Sanduarri and Abdimilkuti upon the necks of their great men.' "[3]

Israel felt with unexampled keenness the pressure of this divine ambition. The Hebrew believed that other gods existed; hence, only by conquest of the nations that served them could Yahweh's superiority be shown. The

[1] Am. 3:2.
[2] Ex. 23:22 f.
[3] J. M. P. Smith, *Am. Journal of Theol.*, V (1901), 506.

occupation of Canaan had been a partial fulfilment of this duty. Once, for two generations, the house of David, the man after God's own heart, had further discharged this patriotic-religious obligation. If, since then, the nation had fallen on evil ways, there must arise a new David who would far outshine the first one in devotion to Yahweh and in achieving world-wide renown in his name.

The patriotism of the earliest prophets partakes of this spirit. Practically all the prophets, from the time of Samuel and the "schools" of his day down to Amos, were the friends and confidential advisers of the reigning monarchs, either in Judah or in Israel. Such were Gad and Nathan to David. Such was Ahijah, whose relation to Jeroboam and his revolt is an interesting illustration of the political activities of the prophets. For a time Ahab's desertion of Israel's religion brings him and his dynasty into conflict with the prophets, led by Elijah and Elisha. When, under Jehu, the revolution which Elisha had planned succeeded, we find the prophets backing the government again. The story of Joash' visit to Elisha on his deathbed shows the prophet as deeply concerned for the victory of his country's armies as any modern fighting parson could be.[1] The watchword of such a prophet as Elisha was not, "My country, right or wrong," but "My country cannot be wrong." It was in this spirit that the prophets of the ninth and eighth centuries rewrote the myths and legends of their race and the history of their country. All was reinterpreted in the light of their belief that right would eventually reign in the triumph of the Hebrew nation over all its enemies and its conquest of all the lands of the earth. The conception which these prophetic chroniclers had of Israel's history is revealed by two or three verses which tell of the victories of the son of Joash, Jeroboam II.

[1] II Kgs. 13:14-19.

> "He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Yahweh, the God of Israel, which he spake by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher. For Yahweh saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was none shut up nor left at large, neither was there any helper for Israel. And Yahweh said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash."[1]

In the southern kingdom the prophets record the prevalent faith that the Davidic line would never cease to reign and thus give the initial impulse to the conception of the Davidic messiah.[2] Indeed all through the history from Samuel to Amos we see religion and patriotism going hand in hand. The two recorded outbursts of prophetic "enthusiasm," in the times of Samuel and Elisha, seem intentionally to have combined religious and patriotic fervor. In fact, the worship of Yahweh was the one common bond between the tribes. The prophets before Amos continually preached Israel's duty to serve Yahweh, and they were enriching the idea of service with ethical content, but they were equally emphatic in proclaiming the promise of Yahweh to bless the nation in return.

This feeling of confidence, born of Israel's history, her sense of mission, and her religious instruction, crystallized into the idea of Yahweh's covenant with his people. While this was not thought of as a commercial contract between two more or less equal parties, but rather like the terms imposed upon a weaker by a benevolent stronger nation, yet it involved mutual rights and obligations.[3] One of our earliest records of this covenant idea is found in Exodus 34:10 ff. Yahweh said,

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[1] II Kgs. 14:25-27. Cp. Buttenwieser, *The Prophets of Israel* (New York, 1914), pp. 238 f.

[2] II Sam. 7:12-17.

[3] See Robinson, *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* (New York, 1913), pp. 186-190.

> "Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been wrought in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of Yahweh; for it is a terrible thing that I do with thee. Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, the Canaanite, etc."[1]

Then follow the original "ten commandments" which defined Israel's obligations to Yahweh. God required of his people worship—sacrifices and offerings—and a certain elementary morality. He promised to do a most astonishing thing—to give that little band of nomads the land of the Canaanites. He had already covenanted with Abraham to make his seed a great nation, as numerous as the stars of Heaven.[2] Later he made a covenant with David to establish his throne forever.[3] According to the Book of Jeremiah, God established an indissoluble covenant with David, his servant, and with the priests the Levites, Yahweh's ministers.[4] Down to the time of Jesus and beyond, this confidence persisted unabated. In the Psalms of Solomon we read,

> "For Thou didst choose the seed of Abraham before all the nations,
> And didst set Thy name upon us, O Lord,
> And Thou wilt not reject us for ever.
> Thou madest a covenant with our father concerning us;
> And we hope in Thee."[5]

Paul could not believe that God had cast off his people. Hence arises the modern idea that the Jews must be converted before the millennium comes.

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[1] See also v. 27 f. and 24:1-8.
[2] Gen. 15:5-18, from JE.
[3] II Sam. 7:8-16. Driver thinks this substantially pre-Deuteronomic, c. 700 B. C., *Introduction*, p. 183.
[4] Jer. 31:35-37; 33:20-22.
[5] 9:17 ff., dating from the first century B. C.

Israel's future, therefore, was assured. So long as the nation was uniformly, or usually, prosperous, no doubts or fears arose to trouble the pious mind. The suffering of the individual and his relation to Yahweh were not matters of concern. Personal religion, as we conceive it, was practically unknown. The individual was but a part of the group, a cell in the social organism. Only the nation was of moment. Israel's prosperity was evidence at once of Yahweh's power and his favor. Even if reverses came to their armies, or famines, earthquakes, or other "acts of God" brought loss, they were but signs that Yahweh was temporarily displeased, owing to some neglect of his ritual or infringement of his prerogatives.[1] Yahweh could not think of breaking his covenant, for, if he should, he would be without worshippers. Princes and people were convinced that they could "lean upon Yahweh, and say, Is not Yahweh in the midst of us? no evil shall come upon us."[2] If at any time Israel did not seem to be fulfilling her lofty mission, then Yahweh would surely intervene to vindicate himself and the people whom he had chosen, as tradition told them he had done in the past.[3] To the popular mind the "day of Yahweh" meant this time of visitation and vindication, when he would punish Israel's enemies and reveal himself as the mightiest of gods by making his people the greatest of nations. Jeremiah describes Judah as languishing from drought and praying to Yahweh in her anguish,

> "Though our iniquities testify against us, work thou for thy name's sake, O Yahweh; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. O thou hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a sojourner in the land? . . .

[1] See Josh. 7; II Sam. 21:24.

[2] Mic. 3:11.

[3] The hopefulness of the popular faith is revealed in such passages as the "Blessing of Jacob," Gen. 49 (1000-900 B. C.), the "Oracles of Balaam," Num. 23-24 (1000-800 B. C.), and the "Blessing of Moses," Dt. 33 (780 B. C.).

> Yet thou, O Yahweh, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not."[1]

The foundation, then, of the Hebrew national hope was a firm faith in the inseparable relation between Israel and Yahweh. He was their God, they were his people. For his own name's sake he must make them a great nation.

II. Popular Theology and the Day of Yahweh

The Hebrew national hope involved, then, two ideas: (1) the day of Yahweh, when he should manifest and vindicate himself and them, and (2) the new era that should follow. What was the popular idea as to the nature of this self-manifestation and what was the origin of the conception? The answer to this double question is difficult, because, in the first place, we have no records of the popular conceptions that preceded the writing prophets; in the second, because we are not sure of the integrity of most of the prophetic books that have come down to us; and, in the third, because we cannot tell how much of the prophetic language is to be taken literally and how much figuratively. However, the comparative study of religions, particularly among Israel's neighbors, throws light on our problem. Conceptions familiar in near-by countries and mentioned in Hebrew literature were probably popular among the Hebrews.[2] Again, we may feel fairly sure that, where the prophets seem to take ideas for granted, or to use expressions as if common, they have adopted them from the national stock of tradition. And, finally, it does not matter for our present purpose whether we can determine within a century or two the date of a given passage. In any case, there is little difference of opinion as to the dates of the threatening oracles, those that have to do with the day of Yahweh.

[1] Jer. 14:7-9. See Buttenwieser, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 184 ff.
[2] See below, sec. III. See Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, esp. pp. 37-40.

The foundation, then, of the Hebrew national hope we have found in the national theology, in the prevalent conception of the relation of Yahweh to his people. The sources of its content, of the bizarre and complicated ideas which clothed and gave form to it, are to be sought partly in theology, partly in mythology.

The term "day of Yahweh"[1] is an example of the concreteness with which the Hebrew was accustomed to express himself. Instead of speaking of future rewards and punishments, of Yahweh's future manifestation of himself, he puts all these ideas into a short pictorial phrase. Its closest analogy seems to be the use of "day of" with a local proper name to indicate a day of battle, or of some signal disaster or judgment which occurs at the place mentioned, a use also found in Arabic. Thus we read of the "days of Gibeah,"[2] the "day of Jerusalem,"[3] the "day of Egypt,"[4] the "day of Midian."[5] Equivalent expressions are "that day,"[6] "those days,"[7] "that time,"[8] "the day,"[9] and "in those days and at that time."[10] "In the latter days"[11] is usually connected with the hope of future happiness. Often predictions begin with "Lo, the days come,"[12] which conveys the same idea. Perhaps its content is best seen in such expression as,

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[1] See Robinson, *Religious Ideas of the OT*, pp. 190-193; J. M. P. Smith, article "Day of Yahweh" in *Am. Journal of Theol.* V (1901) 505-533; Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 240-252.

[2] Hos. 10:9.

[3] Ps. 137:7.

[4] Ez. 30:9.

[5] Is. 9:4. The "day of Jezreel," Hos. 1:11, according to Harper, "Int. Crit. Com.", *Hosea, ad loc.*, means the "day of sowing."

[6] Is. 2:11; 17:4, 7; 30:23; Jer. 4:9; Hos. 2:18; Joel 3:18; Am. 2:16; Mic. 2:4; 5:10; Hag. 2:23; Zech. 9:16; 13:1; 14:4, 6, 9.

[7] Jer. 31:33; 33:15; Zech. 8:23; Joel 3:1.

[8] Jer. 4:11; 31:1; Zeph. 3:19, 20.

[9] Ez. 7:10, 12.

[10] Jer. 33:15; Joel 3:1.

[11] Gen. 49:1; Dt. 4:30; Is. 2:2=Mic. 4:1; Hos. 3:5.

[12] Jer. 23:5, 7; 31:27, 31, 38; 33:14.

"Yahweh of hosts hath a day upon all that is proud and haughty."[1]

"Yahweh hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion."[2]

It was inevitable that the nature of the manifestation of Yahweh on that supreme "day," when he was to come to vindicate himself and his people, should be determined by the prevailing conception of Yahweh's character. Whatever the source of the idea,[3] Yahweh was generally regarded as a war god.

"He is spoken of as a 'man of war.'[4] An early collection of songs was called 'The Book of Wars of Yahweh,'[5] Israel's enemies were his enemies;[6] Israel's wars were his wars;[7] Israel's armies were his armies.[8] The title 'Yahweh of hosts' was interpreted as meaning 'God of the armies of Israel.' "[9] So also occasionally the sword of Yahweh is mentioned.[10] He will "whet the lightning of his sword."[11] "The Assyrian shall fall by the sword, not of man; and the sword, not of men, shall devour him."[12] As Professor J. M. P. Smith says,

> "The *popular* conception of the Day of Yahweh was, in short, that of a great day of battle on which Yahweh would place himself at the head of the armies of Israel

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[1] Is. 2:12 mg.

[2] Is. 34:8.

[3] See Gressmann, *Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie* (Göttingen, 1905), pp. 71-76; *HDB* II 202 f., III 137 f.

[4] Ex. 15:3.

[5] Num. 21:14.

[6] I Sam. 30:26.

[7] Ex. 17:15 f.; Jud. 5:25; I Sam. 18:17; 25:28.

[8] I Sam. 17:26, 36.

[9] I Sam. 17:45. Knudson, *Religious Teachings of the Old Testament* (New York, 1918), p. 116 f.

[10] Jos. 5:13; Zeph. 2:12; Jer. 25:31; 47:6; 50:35 ff.; Is. 34:5; 66:16; Ez. 21:3 f., 8 ff., 14; 32:10; Ps. 7:12; cp. Gen. 3:24. See Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 76-82, and below, p. 51.

[11] Dt. 32:41, mg.

[12] Is. 31:8.

and lead them on to overwhelming victory over all their enemies."[1]

In the beginning, however, Yahweh seems to have been a god, not of war, but of nature.[2] The earliest descriptions we have of his activities connect him with nature in her more terrible moods. In that primitive piece of Hebrew literature, the Song of Deborah, the coming of Yahweh to the aid of his people is thus described:

> "Yahweh, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
> When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
> The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
> Yea, the clouds dropped water.
> The mountains quaked at the presence of Yahweh,
> Even yon Sinai at the presence of Yahweh, the God of Israel."[3]

The theophany at Sinai, according to tradition his fundamental, determinative manifestation to Israel, was either that of a storm god, or a volcanic deity, master of fire and earthquake.[4] Hebrew history shows that Yahweh was thought of as withholding or sending rains and fruitful seasons, as raining fire from Heaven, as sending plagues, in fact, as having all the processes of nature in his hands, and this, long before monotheism made him the one almighty ruler of the universe.

Accordingly the day of Yahweh involved mighty natural catastrophes. Yahweh "fought for Israel with storm, hail, thunderstorm, earthquake, fire, and pestilence, or, in other words, Yahweh is war god only in so far as he is nature god."[5] The two conceptions were combined in Hebrew thought. Inasmuch as the passages which refer to Yahweh as God of nature are the earlier and the more

[1] "The Day of Yahweh," *Am. Journal of Theol.* V (1901), 512.
[2] Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 8-70.
[3] Jud. 5:4 f.
[4] Gressmann argues for the latter interpretation, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-49.
[5] Gressmann, *Ursprung*, p. 76.

numerous, it is only natural to infer that from prehistoric times the Day of Yahweh was thought of as a time of natural convulsions and that the idea of warfare was secondary.

The final manifestation of Yahweh is described by every prophet with traits drawn from great natural catastrophes.

> "I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind. . . . And flight shall perish from the swift; and the strong shall not strengthen his force; neither shall the mighty deliver himself, . . . and he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith Yahweh."[1]
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> "For, behold, Yahweh cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be melted under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, as waters that are poured down a steep place."[2]
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> "And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. . . . When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. As often as it passeth through, it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be nought but terror to understand the message. . . .
>
> "There shall be a visitation from Yahweh of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire. . . .
>
> "Behold, the name of Yahweh cometh from far, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a devouring fire; and his breath is as an overflowing stream, that

[1] Am. 1:14; 2:14 ff.
[2] Mic. 1:3 f.

> reacheth even to the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction. . . . And Yahweh will cause his glorious voice to be heard, and will show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and the flame of a devouring fire, with a blast, and tempest, and hailstones. . . . For a Topheth is prepared of old; yea, for the king it is made ready; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of Yahweh, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."[1]
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> "Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as the whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are ruined. . . . Behold, the tempest of Yahweh, even his wrath, is gone forth, yea, a whirling tempest: it shall burst upon the head of the wicked."[2]

These passages, which may be paralleled in nearly every prophet from Amos to Ezekiel, from 750 to 550 B. C., exhibit an astonishing unanimity in the use of the terrifying features of natural catastrophes. Fire, smoke, tempest, whirlwind, hail, thunder, lightning, volcanic outbursts, famine, drought, pestilence, desolation, darkness, the overthrow of man, bird, and beast, desolation upon land and sea, all these are to be manifestations of Yahweh in the great "day."

Although we cannot be absolutely sure, it would seem that the day of Yahweh was thought of as a world catastrophe already in the eighth century. Hosea is easily so interpreted.

> "Yahweh hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor goodness, nor knowledge of God in the land. . . . Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the

[1] Is. 28:17 ff.; 29:6; 30:27, 30, 33.
[2] Jer. 4:13; 23:19.

heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away."[1]

The context would seem to indicate that the prophet is thinking only of his own land and some calamity that was at that moment upon it.[2] But the Hebrew word *erec* means either "earth," or "land," and when beasts, birds, and fishes are included in the catastrophe, it is but a short step to the universal. Certainly Nahum, Zephaniah, and Ezekiel thus picture it. In Zephaniah we read,

> "I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground, saith Yahweh. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the face of the ground, saith Yahweh."[3]

The Doom Song of Babylon, written by a younger contemporary of Ezekiel, paints it most distinctly:

> "Behold, the day of Yahweh cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. . . . Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Yahweh of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."[4]

It is entirely possible, although it cannot be conclusively proved, that this world catastrophe was thought of as a sort of second flood[5] which should inaugurate a new world order; it was the concluding act in the drama of

[1] 4:1-3.
[2] So most commentators. The "shall" of verse 3 should be "doth".
[3] 1:2 f. Cp. Am. 8:9; Is. 28:22; Ez. 38:19-23.
[4] Is. 13:9-11, 13.
[5] Cp. Is. 54:9; 28:17 ff.

the old world cycle which, by destroying the old, made way for the new cycle which was to begin again with the age of gold.[1] Those pictures of the new age which represent it as an idyllic time of universal peace and good will between man and beast, as in a restored Garden of Eden, bear out this supposition.

III. Mythological Influences

The national theology, then, accounts for the fact that the day of Yahweh included the idea of a great battle and the expectation of a terrible catastrophe. Certain other traits appear in the descriptions of the coming "day" that cannot thus be explained. How these were borrowed from current mythology we will now try to show. Since this side of the subject is newer and more open to debate, it will be necessary to give special space to its discussion.

Far more than any other ancient race, the Hebrews progressed beyond the primitive myths in which the beginnings of religion express themselves and eliminated them from their sacred writings. We cannot but believe that the Hebrews originally had such mythology and that it persisted among the people long after the leaders of the race, the men who gave us the literature which is preserved, had abandoned such naïve views; for all other races which have left literatures and the primitive peoples who still exist in parts of the world bear witness to the universal tendency of mankind to put their first dawning consciousness of matters theological and religious into stories of gods and heroes and dragons. When now we come to compare the extant Hebrew literature with the mythologies of the neighboring races we find here and there traces of the same myths that made up the full con-

[1] Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 159-168, preserves germs of truth amid some fanciful combinations.

tent of theology for these less moral and less thoughtful nations.

For example, very close parallels to the Hebrew story of the Creation and the Flood are to be found among the Babylonians, and the idea of a primitive Paradise is known almost the world over.[1] That the biblical writers had cuneiform documents before them from which they took and transformed certain mythological materials as a modern writer uses illustrations and anecdotes is, of course, not to be supposed. But that such materials were to be found in the traditions of the race and, as a part of the intellectual and emotional background of the people, were used to point a moral, to illustrate a truth, is not to be denied.[2] We must even go a step farther. The biblical writers found truth revealed to them in these myths, truth nobler and purer than the common people could conceive; and they used and adapted these well known traditions to convey to their less thoughtful contemporaries their new vision. The old stories, therefore, were partially recast, and repeatedly alluded to in the writings of the great teachers of Israel. They come down to us, not only in the traditions of Genesis, but also in poetical allusions in many parts of the Bible. It is this "floating myth material," taken up into our Bible and used sometimes in quite a different sense from that which it had among the people, out of which our picture of the early Hebrew conceptions of the day of Yahweh and the Golden Age which should follow it must in part be constructed. Fortunately the task has already been under-

[1] See Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, (Oxford University Press, 1912), pp. 1-186; *ERE*, arts. "Cosmogony and Cosmology," "Deluge," and "Blest, Abode of"; *HDB*, arts. "Cosmogony," etc.

[2] "Critics have not taken adequate account of possible foreign and traditional elements in the religious beliefs of pre-exilic Israel." Knudson, *Religious Teachings of the OT*, p. 33.

taken by various writers and some results have been achieved.[1]

Three myths in particular bear upon the problem of this book, (1) that of the primeval monster of darkness and disorder, (2) that of the divine hero who overthrows this monster, and (3) that of the resulting age of happiness and peace which this divine savior ushers in. In the Babylon myth Tiâmat, the female dragon of the deep, conspires with her fellows to destroy the gods. As she advances with a terrifying brood of monsters to attack them, Anshar, commander of the gods, sends Ea and Anu to the defence, but they quail before the dreadful hosts of evil. Then Marduk comes to the rescue. He catches Tiâmat in his net, drives the storm wind down her gaping throat, and pierces her heart with his spear. Having conducted her blood away to unknown regions, he makes one half of her body into the firmament, setting a guard to keep back the waters above, and builds a palace for the gods. He probably uses the second half of the body to make the earth, and then proceeds with the other steps of creation.[2]

That essentially the same myth was known among the Hebrews is evident, not merely from the creation story of Genesis, but from numerous references to the monster of the deep, called sometimes the Deep, sometimes the Sea, sometimes Leviathan, sometimes Behemoth, sometimes Rahab, sometimes the Serpent.[3] *Tehom,* the Hebrew

[1] The pioneer was Gunkel in his *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (1895). The two works to which I owe most are Hugo Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie* ("Forschungen zur Religion und Literature des Alten und Neuen Testaments," Göttingen, 1905), and W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Evolution of the Messianic Idea* (New York, 1908). On the matter of method see the last, pp. 1-15, 39 f.

[2] See *HBD* I 505, and Oesterley, *Messianic Idea,* p. 61.

[3] Gen. 1:2; Am. 9:3; Is. 51:9 f.; 30:7; 27:1; Ps. 74:12-15; 89:9 ff.; Job 26:12 f.; 40:15-41; 34; cp. Oesterley, *op cit.,* pp. 45-58. That some of these passages are late is to be noted, but Am. 9:3 shows the myth to have been familiar to the early Hebrews, as, from their close connections with Babylonia, we should have expected.

word for "deep" in Gen. 1:2, is etymologically the same as Tiâmat. In his account of creation the biblical writer has completely eliminated the mythology out of which he creates it. In other passages, such as Is. 51:9 f. and Ps. 74:12-15, the mythological background is plainly in evidence, although in some instances the language may be regarded as figurative. For the great majority of Hebrews this primeval monster of the abyss, rival of the gods in heathen mythology, of Yahweh in Hebrew thought, still existed as the embodiment of evil, first in the sense of physical or material harm, later as the source of moral evil. The serpent in the story of the Fall is the same hostile power, subtly making inroads into the kingdom of the good deity who had conquered him in fair fight.

When one compares the Babylonian myth with Is. 51:9 f., it is quite evident that Yahweh has simply taken the place of Marduk.

> "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Yahweh; awake, as in the days of old, the generations of ancient times. Is it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces, that didst pierce the monster? Is it not thou that driedst up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that madest the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?"

Psalm 104:5-9 has almost completely transformed the myth:

> He founded the earth upon its bases,"[1]
> That it should not be moved for ever.
> Thou coveredst it with the deep (Tehom) as with a vesture;
> The waters stood above the mountains.
> At thy rebuke they fled;
> At the voice of thy thunder they hasted away
> (The mountains rose, the valleys sank down)
> Unto the place which thou hadst founded for them.
> Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over;
> That they turn not again to cover the earth."

[1] Using the marginal reading of the ASV.

Other passages show still less distinct allusions.[1] In view of the process of editing and adapting through which the material has gone, as Oesterley says,

> "it is not to be expected that these passages should offer much more than *echoes* of the distant past. But those echoes seem, at any rate, to reveal the root-idea, viz., that a 'Savior-Hero' subdued the primeval watery monster; he then formed men and became their Benefactor or 'Heilbringer' in that he gave them material blessings. This figure, at first probably only an indistinct Ancestor-Hero, gradually assumed a superhuman character, . . . finally the God of Israel, Yahweh, became identified with him. . . . The central root-idea is belief in the existence of a great Divine-Human Helper, who, subduing the Dragon, prepared the way for the presence of men on earth; these men he made, and furnished them with material blessings."[2]

As we have seen above, the primeval monster, the source of evil, material and spiritual, was not destroyed, but merely conquered, according to Hebrew belief. Thus the presence of evil in the world which Yahweh had created was explained.[3] Following the idea of the myth it was natural that the belief should arise that some day Yahweh would return to complete the task and utterly annihilate the old Dragon and all her brood. Since the Savior-Creator of the original myth had in popular thought traits of both the divine and the human, the poetic language describing his return to the earth exhibits, sometimes the one, sometimes the other conception, or even both combined. This hope is crossed by another that arose quite naturally in the southern kingdom, the expectation of the restoration of the glories of the Davidic dynasty.

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[1] Gen. 2:5-7; Ps. 65:6 ff.; 89:6 ff.; cp. Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 83-107.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 106 f.

[3] This was only one of several explanations of the origin of sin. It is not implied that this cycle of myths was the only theology of the Hebrews.

We may well suppose that Isaiah was not going far beyond the hopes of the people when he painted his picture of the child that should be born, whose name should be called "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace." Such language can be accounted for as the exaggerated "court style" of ancient oriental lands, in which the king was frequently endowed with the attributes of divinity.[1] How much of this language was literally intended and how much figuratively it is difficult for us to say, for the distinction is a modern and a western one. Here were the elements ready for the development of the messianic idea.

In the transfer of the myth of the primeval conflict to the future and its confusion with the coming day of Yahweh we have the explanation of many phrases in the description of that day which are otherwise unintelligible, and illumination of some that otherwise would not appear notable. Thus Yahweh's "strong hand" and "mighty arm" are renowned for their victory over Rahab.[2] Yahweh's sword, taking the place of Marduk's spear, will punish Leviathan and slay the monster that is in the sea *in that day*.[3]

We understand why in Rev. 20:2 allusion is made to the "Devil and Satan" as "the dragon, the old serpent," and why in Rev. 21:1, when the new heaven and new earth appear, "the sea is no more." The sea stands as representative of the old dragon, which, indeed, according to the myth, it was.

To sum up our conclusions thus far: The descriptions of natural convulsions were an indispensable part of the prophet's literary stock in trade; they had an essential place in his repertoire, like the Hungarian rhapsody for an orchestra. They are like the allusions to biblical narratives, Greek mythology, fairy stories, and well known

[1] Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 250-259.
[2] Ps. 89:10, 13.
[3] Is. 27:1; cp. Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 76-81.

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historical events which enliven and illustrate our literature. This could hardly have been true unless they were also an accepted part of the popular conception of the day of Yahweh.[1]

It is probable that in Nahum, Zephaniah, and Ezekiel, earnest souls, but less gifted than others of the early prophets, we come nearest to the popular conception.[2] For them, as for all Israel since their entrance into Canaan, Yahweh was a god of war as well as of nature. His weapons were the thunder, the lightning, the hail, the tornado, the earthquake, the volcano, the plague, the pestilence. His armies were the flames of great conflagrations, the swarms of locusts and palmerworms and flies, the beasts of the field, poisonous serpents, the satyrs and demons of the wilderness, the very stars of the heavens, the celestial powers, the demons of the abyss. Israel's God was "Yahweh of hosts," commander, not merely of the armies of Israel, nor even of the heavenly hosts alone, but of all the activities and energies of the universe, natural and supernatural, angelic and demonic.[3] More than that, he was the benefactor-hero who at the beginning slew the dragon of the abyss, the great enemy of good, and who eventually would reappear to complete his victory over all the hosts of evil, human and demonic. On the basis of such a conception of Yahweh, Nahum could say,

> "Yahweh taketh vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. . . . Yahweh hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the

[1] See Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 241-248.

[2] See Buttenwieser, *Prophets of Israel*, p. xxi.

[3] Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 190, on Am. 5:15, says that the term Yahweh of hosts means "God of all forces, also, e.g., of the Assyrian armies." He refers to his *Geschichte der israelitischen Religion*, ed. 4, p. 139 f., ed. 5, 1907, pp. 157 ff., and to Schwally, *Semit. Kriegsaltertümer*, p. 5, who thinks that it originally meant "Lord of the war demons." Gressmann thinks the title borrowed from another god and its original meaning forgotten, *Ursprung*, p. 76.

clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers. . . . The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt; and the earth is upheaved at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder by him. Yahweh is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that take refuge in him. But with an over-running flood he will make a full end of her place, and will pursue his enemies into darkness."[1]

IV. The Expected Golden Age

The result of such a coming of Yahweh as was expected could only be the highest happiness and prosperity of Israel. Am. 5:18-20 is decisive as to the content of the prevailing view. No one would "desire the day of Yahweh" if it were not to be a day of joy and triumph. It is quite evident that the prophet is combatting this popular optimism when he insists that that day is to be darkness and not light.[2] Just how it was expected that the Hebrew nation would escape the anticipated world-wide catastrophe, we need not inquire. Popular theology is never worked out consistently in all its details. Moreover, the much more thoughtful prophets do not explain just how the remnant they expected to survive that day would be saved. Yahweh would take care of his people, of that the multitude was sure.

We can only guess at the conditions they expected to

[1] 1:2-8.

[2] Professor Knudson's arguments for identifying the popular and prophetic point of view (*Relig. Teachings of the OT*, pp. 358 ff.) do not appear to me conclusive. The one expression which sustains his contention that the people expected judgment to be visited upon Israel, "ye that put far away the evil day" (Am. 6:3), may easily be explained as expressing the attitude of indifference taken by many toward the prophet's message.

prevail after the wrath was overpassed. Yet in all probability the prophets borrowed the language of popular faith to describe the future Golden Age, as they did to portray the intervening destruction. Many critics have supposed the passage found in Mic. 4:1-3 and Is. 2:2-4 to have been quoted by these two contemporaries from an earlier prophet, as presenting "a 'classic' description of the ideal Kingdom of God."[1] Furthermore, it may be thought that the passage states the conception which was popularly accepted as to the character of the Golden Age that would dawn when Yahweh had overthrown his enemies and ruled the world. As we shall see later, the prophets took long steps in advance of the popular view. They introduced moral elements which were entirely lacking in the faith of the masses. We cannot, therefore, take any passage that has come down in our Old Testament books as depicting the expectations of the "man in the street."

It is entirely consistent, however, with our previous picture of the popular faith[2] to take as substantially descriptive of it those passages which portray an ideal, happy, prosperous future, in which no Israelite should want and in which the nation should be supreme in all the earth. No Hebrew could refuse to believe that

> "in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Yahweh's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong

[1] Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets* (New York, 1907), p. 399. For the contrary view see J. M. P. Smith, "Int. Crit. Com.," *Micah*, etc., p. 84.

[2] See above, pp. 31-39.

nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Yahweh of hosts hath spoken it."[1]

Micah gives an interesting verse which Isaiah has omitted. Whether the description of the "peaceful Palestinian countryside with the rural inhabitants in the enjoyment of peace and plenty"[2] in verse 4 is quoted by Micah from a predecessor, or was added by a later hand, it contributes an important trait to the portrayal of the popular hope.

The "universalism" of the passage may well have been beyond the purview of the religion of the average man. His horizon was a narrow one. He might not even go so far as to care for the service which other nations could render him. He would wish to be let alone. "The chosen land for the chosen people" would satisfy all his desires. The latter days would be a time of idyllic peace and plenty: he cared for nothing more.

In the popular conception of the new era to follow the day of Yahweh many mythological traits are to be noted. Since after the primeval conflict the Savior-Hero created man and gave him material blessings, it was but natural that the same result should be expected to follow his final victory. The Golden Age at the beginning of the world would return again when Yahweh appeared in his might. That the myth of the Garden of Eden was well known among the Hebrews is proved, not only by its presence in Genesis, but also by occasional allusions in other parts of

[1] Mic. 4:1-4.

[2] J. M. P. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 87 f.; it seems to me an argument for the antiquity of the whole passage that the "peasant prophet" retains this touch, while the city-bred Isaiah drops it. See below, p. 81 f., for a discussion of the date of these "hopeful" passages.

the Bible.[1] The most striking characteristic of existence in this primitive paradise was its Arcadian peace and material comfort, just that which any Israelite, in the days when invasion and want threatened on every side, would most desire. We can well understand, then, how the prophets borrowed traits from the popular notion to paint the new era when Yahweh really came to reign as a time when there should be no more war and the people should live in joy and plenty. One might not suspect any mythological coloring were it not for the fact that all nature is to be transformed. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."[2]

Along with the change of animal nature goes the transformation of the desert. Yahweh says, according to the great prophet of the Exile,

> "I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."[3]

The hills are to be razed and the valleys filled,[4] Jerusalem is to be set upon the tops of the mountains,[5] and from the temple will flow a river of living water.[6] Such language shows the myth-making fancy rather than the poetical imagination at work.

Had the idea of the Messiah already been introduced, or was it the popular expectation that Yahweh would act directly and in his own person? In view of the lack of literary remains of the popular religion, we cannot decide how far the prophets are responsible for the conception of

[1] Ez. 28:13; Is. 51:3; cp. Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 123-129.
[2] Is. 11:6; cp. Hos. 2:18, "a covenant with the beasts of the field."
[3] Is. 41:18; cp. 30:25; 43:19 f.
[4] Is. 40:4; 42:16; 49:11.
[5] Is. 2:2=Mic. 4:1.
[6] Ez. 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8; see Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 112, 224-227.

the ideal ruler. The problem is further complicated by the fact that a majority of critical scholars formerly regarded those passages in the earlier prophets which portray the coming king as interpolations from a later hand.[1] The study, however, of Hebrew eschatology in the light of conceptions current in other nations and a more careful investigation of remnants of popular belief imbedded in Hebrew literature have caused a decided reaction against this scepticism, as it has in the matter of all the passages describing a glorious future after the day of wrath.[2] We certainly are justified in supposing that the theory was current that the Davidic line would recover its ancient power and glory after that "great and terrible day," and would rule as direct representative of Yahweh in a powerful and prosperous kingdom. If we do not read too much into the "court language" of the prophets, their picture of the ideal ruler is not anachronistic.

It is perfectly clear that both Assyrians and Egyptians expected a king to arise who would put an end to injustice and suffering and usher in a "Golden Age," a "millennium," although these terms are, to be sure, not used. Various monarchs even claim to realize this expectation.[3] The language used is, to us, highly hyperbolical, implying supernatural attainments. The Hebrews were, of course, aware of this expectation and the claims to have fulfilled it. They naturally believed with complete conviction that it was their royal line which would eventually realize the hope of the nations. Therefore there is no difficulty in ascribing to the earliest writing prophets very lofty claims for the future perfect king of the Davidic line.

May we add to this king the supernatural characteristics which belong to the Savior-Hero of mythology? The probabilities seem against this. We have as yet no direct evidence on the point. So long as the people could think

[1] For example, Is. 9:1-7; 11:1-10.
[2] See Knudson, *Relig. Teachings of the OT*, p. 33.
[3] See above, p. 9.

anthropomorphically of Yahweh, a divine-human king was unnecessary in the great drama of the day of Yahweh and likewise in the new era that should follow. Yahweh himself would appear to overthrow their enemies and to inaugurate the new kingdom, which would be ruled by a Davidic monarch as his viceroy. The materials for the development of the conception of the messiah were already present, however, in the thought of the nation in pre-Isaian times, and only waited the touch of the hand of the master to begin to reveal their inherent truth.[1]

The account which we have given of popular religion in the days of the first writing prophets implies a reconstruction of accepted views on the history of Israel's religious development. It has been customary for critical scholars to agree that Hebrew eschatology and apocalypticism were the product of exilic and postexilic times.[2] We have adopted a view which is described as "a complete reversal of current views concerning Hebrew eschatology."[3] It does not necessarily involve an earlier date for the hopeful prophecies, but it does make such a dating much easier to accept. It adopts a view which makes the development of Hebrew prophecy more natural and easily understood.

Briefly summarized this theory is as follows: Out of primitive superstitious fear, the sense of dependence upon higher powers, the desire for happiness, there grew up among the Hebrews, as among other nations, certain myths explaining the origin of the world and the course of its future history.[4] With these were combined the

[1] See above, p. 51.

[2] H. P. Smith, *The Religion of Israel,* pp. 161, 241 ff.; Charles, *Eschatology,* p. 83 f.

[3] J. M. P. Smith, "Int. Crit. Com.", *Micah,* etc., p. 12. Professor Smith in his review of Gressmann (*Am. Journal of Theol.,* XI [1907], 320-322), admits some of his contentions, and, as it appears to me, does not undermine his fundamental propositions.

[4] See Oesterley, *Messianic Idea,* pp. 19-28.

Hebrew national theology, resulting, in the time of the monarchy, in a firm hope that eventually Israel would triumph over all her foes through the mighty intervention of her God. This hope was already clad in language which may be designated as apocalyptic, representing the theophany which was to usher in the new day as a natural catastrophe, or series of catastrophes, in which the elements should fight for Israel. It was thoroughly "supernatural," to use a modern category, in that it represented Yahweh as working contrary to the ordinary course of nature and outside the course of historical causation. It was eschatological, not merely in that it dealt with the future, but also that it described the blissful era of peace and prosperity which Israel should enjoy under the protection of Yahweh. This, then, was the national hope with which the earliest writing prophets had to reckon and which they used in conveying to their fellow countrymen the messages Yahweh had spoken to their souls.

CHAPTER III

PROPHETIC REINTERPRETATION

I. The Day of Wrath

THE prophets fully adopt the language of mythological catastrophe in describing the visitation of Yahweh's wrath. They use it differently according to their individual literary taste, originality, and spiritual outlook. As one reads Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, he cannot help noticing that, while they have not a little of such material, what they use is powerfully, rather than grotesquely expressed, and it seems to bear a figurative rather than a literal meaning. Micah has almost none of it. Zephaniah, Habukkuk, and Nahum make constant use of the language of cataclysmic overthrow. Jeremiah, partly perhaps because he is less imaginative, deals mainly with conditions that are immediately before his eyes and wanders very rarely into the cloudland of these catastrophic rhapsodies. Ezekiel makes more constant use of such language than any other prophet in the Bible.[1]

It cannot be maintained that any of these mouthpieces of Yahweh believed that what they foretold would actually take place. Paul's use of the Stoic idea of a final world conflagration in I Co. 3:12-15 is parallel to what I understand to have been the prophet's use of current eschatology. He is speaking of a spiritual entity, the church, which is to be tested in "that day" by the "fire" of judg-

[1] See the excellent article by R. H. Kennett, "The Development of the Apocalyptic Style," *Interpreter* VIII 4 (London, July, 1912), 386-401; more emphasis should be laid on mythological allusions (cp. p. 401), following the lines of Gressmann and Oesterley.

ment. Such language is intelligible only on the basis of such a view as the writer of II Pt. 3: 5-12 took literally That Paul understood it so, we cannot say. Just so the prophetic language rests upon and utilizes the popular eschatology, but fundamentally alters its application.

One chief difference between the popular and the prophetic conception of the day of Yahweh was in the historical application of the idea. To the prophets it was a catastrophe, not in nature, but in society. In the minds of the people there was already much of that quietism later seen in Pharisaic circles, which dreamed that in Yahweh's own good time he would break into the course of nature with a mighty catastrophe. Between history and that "far-off divine event" they saw no connection. It was, and is, the supreme task of the prophet to interpret present events in the light of eternal truth. And, therefore, the great prophets of Israel strove mightily to bring the people to see the dreadful day of Yahweh impending in the tremendous historical drama that was being played before their eyes, and in which they were compelled—all unwillingly—to be the chief actors. Without abandoning the mythological scenery familiar to the popular mind, they attempted to display it in such a fashion as to make the living actors more important than the stage setting. For the prophets the "hosts of Yahweh" are not chiefly the hosts of heaven and the destructive powers of nature, but the mighty armies of the Assyrians, the Scythians, the Babylonians, and the Persians, whose tread shakes the lands like an earthquake; who sweep over the world like a destroying flood; in whose wake rises the smoke of burning cities and villages, as when Yahweh rained fire on the cities of the plain. At Yahweh's command the sword and famine and pestilence stalk together over the land. Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus are his servants.

> "He will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss for them from the end of the earth; and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly. None shall

be weary or stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes broken: whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; their horses' hoofs shall be accounted as flint, and their wheels as a whirlwind: their roaring shall be like a lioness, they shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away, and there shall be none to deliver. And they shall roar against them in that day like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold, darkness and distress; and the light is darkened in the clouds thereof."[1]

"Forasmuch as this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remeliah's son; now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory: and it shall come up over all its channels, and go over all its banks; and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."[2]

Thus Isaiah gives a marvellously powerful and imaginative interpretation of the mythological conception of the day of Yahweh in terms of contemporary history. Jeremiah almost sloughs off the supernatural coloring. He threatens the people continually (eighteen times all told) with famine, pestilence, and the sword, that trinity of terrors that perched upon the banners of Nebuchadnezzar. His manner of thinking is represented in the following:

"Wherefore thus saith Yahweh, the God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith Yahweh: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language

[1] Is. 5:26-30.
[2] Is. 8:6 ff.; cp. 10:5 ff., 28-32.

thous knowest not, neither understandest what they say. Their quiver is an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men. And they shall eat up thy harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat; they shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds; they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig-trees; they shall beat down thy fortified cities, wherein thou trustest, with the sword."[1]

When finally captivity has come upon Judah, as formerly upon the northern kingdom, Jeremiah and Ezekiel feel themselves to be in the very midst of the great historical catastrophe which, for them, is the day of Yahweh.

"Behold, the tempest of Yahweh, even his wrath, is gone forth, yea, a whirling tempest: it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. The anger of Yahweh shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it perfectly."[2]

"Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: An evil, an only evil; behold, it cometh. An end is come, the end is come; it awaketh against thee; behold, it cometh. Thy doom (*margin*: The turn, *or* The crowning time) is come unto thee, O inhabitant of the land: the time is come, the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting, upon the mountains. Now will I shortly pour out my wrath upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways. . . . Behold, the day, behold, it cometh: thy doom is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. . . . The time is come, the day draweth near."[3]

The mythological sword of Yahweh becomes the sword of Nebuchadnezzar:

"Thus saith Yahweh: Say, A sword, a sword, it is sharpened, it is also furbished; it is sharpened that it may make a slaughter; it is furbished that it may be as lightning. . . . Also, thou son of man, appoint thee

[1] Jer. 5:14-17; cp. Hab. 1:5-11.
[2] Jer. 23:19 f.
[3] Ez. 7:5 ff., 10, 12.

two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come."[1]

"I sought for a man among them, that should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I brought upon their heads, saith the Lord Yahweh."[2]

Such language clearly represents the day of Yahweh as a historical event, divine and providential in its purposes, but not supernatural or miraculous in its methods. It is the punishment of Israel in the Babylonian captivity.

When, at length, the blow has fully fallen, the later prophets come to view the matter in a new light. Israel had her day of Yahweh in the Exile. Israel's little neighbors received their due at the hand of Assyria or Babylonia. Jeremiah 51:7 says,

"Babylon hath been a golden cup in Yahweh's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad."

So Assyria shall, in turn, fall before the Medes,[3] Egypt shall meet her day of Yahweh at the hand of the Babylonians,[4] and Babylon hers again at the end of the Medes.[5] All the prophets give these "days" more or less of eschatological coloring, but they plainly refer to historical events.

These historical occurrences, however, could not be regarded as fulfilling the old Hebrew idea of the day of Yahweh as a cosmic catastrophe. Moreover, the terrible invasion from the north, long an element of popular ex-

[1] Ez. 21:9 f., 19.
[2] Ez. 22:30 f.
[3] Nahum.
[4] Ez. 29-32.
[5] Is. 13.

pectation[1] and explicitly prophesied by Jeremiah[2] had never taken place. The nations had not been sufficiently punished and, most important of all, Yahweh's might had not been convincingly displayed. Therefore Ezekiel puts the day of Yahweh, the final all-embracing day, off into the distant future.

Israel will for long years enjoy her new age of unexampled prosperity, which will ensue upon the sufferings of the Captivity. Then all the distant nations, which, up to that time, had not known Yahweh's power, will assemble to attack her under the leadership of a mythical Gog, of the land of Magog. Yahweh will meet them with an overwhelming destruction.

> "For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Yahweh: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And with pestilence and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone."[3]

In this account, for the first time, we have an explicit interpretation and application of an older prophecy. Other prophets had taken over and used well known predictions, but without noting the fact. Ezekiel makes Yahweh speak thus to Gog:

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[1] Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 174-192.
[2] Chap. 4-6.
[3] Ez. 38:19-22.

> "Thou art he of whom I spake in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring thee against them."[1]

Ezekiel may have been meeting objections to his faith that a long period of prosperity lay before his people, objections based on earlier prophecies of evil that had not been fulfilled. In any case he distinctly puts Yahweh's revelation of himself away, out of the living present into the dreamy future. He removes it from the realm of history into that of mythology, from the tangible real into the mystical unreal. He marks a sorry retrogression to the unsocial conceptions of Amos' contemporaries.

This defection only serves to throw into stronger light the true prophetic reinterpretation of the day of Yahweh. Instead of a supernatural, mythologically conceived catastrophe in nature, having no connection with historical events and expected in the far distant future, the prophets thought of it as an economic, political, and social catastrophe, growing out of historical circumstances, due, in fact, to Israel's manner of living, to her moral and religious attitude, and taking place as a historical event in the near future. To be sure they use, more or less figuratively, the old language of cosmic catastrophe; perhaps they have not entirely escaped the old ideas. But they are heralds of a new day, groping toward the dawn, trying, though uncertainly, to read Yahweh's relation to human life and society.

Ezekiel, on the other hand, marks the re-emergence of the old popular conception of the day of Yahweh with the distinct and conscious reinterpretation of old prophecies to fit new or anticipated situations. In these two points, as in others, which we shall note later, he also marks the

[1] Ez. 38:17. The sentence is to be read affirmatively rather than as an interrogation; Bertholet, *Das Buch Hesekiel*, "Kurzer Hand-commentar" (Freiburg i. B., 1897), p. 190; Charles *Eschatology*, p. 106. Reading it as a question does not affect the above argument, for an affirmative answer is implied.

beginning of the age of apocalypses, to which we shall turn in the next chapter.

Out of the attempt to use the old language of cosmic catastrophe and reinterpret it in terms of historical events grows one of the most common ideas of later Jewish and even modern Christian times—the belief that wars and rumors of wars or signal disasters of any kind are heralds of the end of the world. The interest aroused by the recent world war is a case in point. I have been told that immediately following the great San Francisco earthquake and fire, before the embers were cold, a vigorous Adventist propaganda was begun. Our earliest materials indicate the prevalence of the idea among the Hebrews that any disaster or loss was a warning that Yahweh was rising in his wrath. Amos says in Yahweh's name,

> "And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Yahweh. And I also have withholden the rain from you. . . . I have smitten you with blasting and with mildew: the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees hath the palmer-worm devoured; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Yahweh. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt. . . . Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Yahweh. . . . Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."[1]

So any calamity was a warning to be prepared for the great day when Yahweh could appear to vindicate himself by judging and punishing all unrighteousness.

Now the prophets saw in the hostile armies that oppressed Israel Yahweh's ministers of wrath. When, therefore, the Assyrians began to sweep westward, or the Scythians to pour over the Caucasus and devastate Mesopotamia and Syria, they anticipated the speedy ravaging

[1] Am. 4:6-12.

of Palestine and began to proclaim the approach of the day of Yahweh. But they did not mean the end of the world in the modern conception of the term. It is only by combining the language of the world catastrophe which the prophets borrowed from the popular faith with the accepted idea of divine warnings of impending punishment, as the prophets used it, that we come to the notion that wars, or any calamities, are divine warnings of the end of the world. In later literature we see how tremendously this idea took hold upon the Jewish and Christian mind and was developed and embellished.[1]

II. The Cause and Purpose of Yahweh's Self-Manifestation

Having described the manner of Yahweh's self-manifestation, we now turn to its cause and purpose. As we have already seen, everything in Israel's history and in her conception of Deity conduced to an unhesitating confidence in Yahweh's favor and the glorious future of the nation. Though present prospects seemed gloomy, Yahweh was bound by his covenant, as well as by his self-interest, to interpose in their behalf. The popular hope, held by many, if not all, of the nation, was very simple: when Yahweh felt the time ripe, he would bring a great catastrophe upon the world which would destroy all his people's enemies, but, in the midst of this cataclysm, Israel would be saved, even as of old Noah had been. We have seen how the prophets tried to bring this conception of world catastrophe down out of the clouds into everyday life. Their greatest problem, however, was

[1] Clemen, *Primitive Christianity and its Non-Jewish Sources* (Edinburgh, 1912), pp. 117-142, discusses the signs of the end in detail and concludes that the particular expectations found among the Jews and Christians were not of foreign origin, but says, "That belief, however, in premonitory signs in general . . . is, I admit, of Babylonian origin." (p. 139.)

that of bringing out the moral elements already implicit in Israel's religion, and so interpreting the day of Yahweh as to give it ethical content.

The ancient conception of religion, in Israel and out of it, was completely materialistic. If the people brought the prescribed sacrifices and offerings, if the round of feasts was properly observed, Yahweh must favor his people. Had Israel become the Assyria of antiquity, had prosperity instead of reverses continued to be her lot, she probably would never have given the world her unique and supreme religious message. But disaster came, and Yahweh appeared completely to have disregarded his covenant, as the popular mind in the time of the monarchy understood it. Thus a new problem was forced upon the nation when she was permanently reduced to vassalage under Assyria, then Babylonia, then Persia. The complaint of Habakkuk, "O Yahweh, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save,"[1] came from her lips with ever greater vehemence. A psalm writer, probably of the Exile, expresses well the thoughts that must have troubled many of his countrymen:

> "We have heard with our ears, O God,
> Our fathers have told us,
> What work thou didst in their days,
> In the days of old.
> Thou didst drive out the nations with thy hand;
> But them thou didst plant:
> Thou didst afflict the peoples;
> But them thou didst spread abroad.
> . . . . . .
> Thou art my King, O God:
> Command deliverance for Jacob.
> . . . . . .
> In God have we made our boast all the day long,
> And we will give thanks unto thy name forever.

[1] 1:2.

But thou hast cast us off, and brought us to dishonor,
And goest not forth with our hosts.
. . . . . .
Thou hast made us like sheep appointed for food,
And hast scattered us among the nations.
. . . . . .
Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And forgettest our affliction and our oppression?
For our soul is bowed down to the dust:
Our body cleaveth unto the earth.
Rise up for our help,
And redeem us for thy loving-kindness' sake."[1]

Was Yahweh unable to save his people? Believing, as all their neighbors did, that prosperity was the prime evidence of a god's power and favor, and disaster a proof either of his weakness or his anger, the Hebrew nation could not but face the most serious doubt during the long centuries when it suffered under the yoke of foreign oppression. They could not believe that he would be angry forever. Was Yahweh as weak as the nation which worshipped him? Such was the belief of the time. When the Rabshakeh came to Jerusalem and tried, as modern foes have, to arouse a popular insurrection within the enemy nation, he warned the people,

"Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he will not be able to deliver you: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh, saying, Yahweh will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. . . . Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, Yahweh will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hands of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these countries, that have delivered their

[1] Ps. 44:1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 24-26.

country out of my hand, that Yahweh should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"[1]

In the inscribed records of their conquests, the Assyrian monarchs usually give credit to Ashur for their victories. The god of the strong battalions was the strong god, and Yahweh must soon take his place alongside the gods of Samaria, and the other conquered nations, as a lesser deity in the Assyrian pantheon. Ahaz had apparently already adopted this view.[2] When Jerusalem was taken and laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar, no doubt very many Jews, like those who carried Jeremiah down into Egypt with them, believed that they had paid dearly for their faithfulness to Yahweh, and that it was only when they burned incense to the queen of heaven that they "had plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil."[3] They would not listen to any word spoken in the name of Yahweh, for he was unable to save them.

The only alternative was to believe that Israel had so grievously sinned against Yahweh that she deserved exceptionally severe punishment at his hands. That is the view which all the prophets take. Not only did Yahweh's covenant not bind him to favor Israel under all circumstances, but rather it gave him all the better reason for punishing their sins. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities," Yahweh tells Amos.[4] Isaiah's wonderful little vineyard parable has the same moral. Yahweh had lavished special care on his vineyard, yet it brought forth wild grapes. Therefore it should be trampled down and laid waste.[5] Micah says, "Then shall they cry unto Yahweh, but he will not answer them; yea, he will hide his face from them at that time, according as

[1] Is. 36:14, 15, 18-20.
[2] II Kg. 16:10 - 18.
[3] Jer. 44:16 - 18.
[4] Am. 3:2.
[5] Is. 5:1-7.

they have wrought evil in their doings.[1] It is for moral, not ritual delinquencies that they are to suffer. Through Amos Yahweh says,

> "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. . . . Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."[2]

"Cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow," says Isaiah.[3] The four great prophets of the latter part of the eighth century all agree that it is because of Israel's failure to live up to Yahweh's standards of social morality that he is sending terrible punishments upon them.

In two most important particulars, then, these early prophets make an advance beyond their contemporaries:

First, the purpose of Yahweh's self-manifestation was not to vindicate his people or his power, but his righteousness.

Second, as a necessary corollary, the day of Yahweh would fall upon Israel as much as upon other nations. Amos very adroitly begins by showing how the day of Yahweh will affect the hated enemy nations surrounding Israel, but only to give himself the firmer ground for his message that, when Yahweh bares his mighty arm, it will fall heaviest upon his own people.

Of all the pre-exilic prophets Nahum alone stands with those whom Israel's great religious leaders called false prophets. He has no word concerning heart religion or social righteousness.

> "Behold, upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! Keep thy feasts, O Judah, perform thy vows; for the wicked

[1] Mic. 3:4.
[2] 5:21, 23, 24.
[3] 1:16 f.

one shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off."[1]

Only ritual observances are necessary to secure Yahweh's favor. Nahum does not use the term "day of Yahweh," but he describes Yahweh's intervention with all the familiar traits of world catastrophe,[2] and proclaims that thus Yahweh will take vengeance upon his enemies, of whom Nineveh is chief. The only reason we can see for the preservation of this one anti-prophetic book in the Old Testament is that within half a dozen years after it was composed, Nineveh actually fell, as Nahum had been keen enough to foresee. Nahum's defection seems so much the more remarkable when one remembers that he was a contemporary of Jeremiah, the most spiritual of the prophets. His non-moral, anti-prophetic attitude serves to bring into stronger relief the ethical progress which the other prophets had made, for it shows the difficulties against which they had to contend.[3]

During the Exile one prophet strikes a new note. Jeremiah and Ezekiel, with practically all the pre-exilic prophets, regard the disaster which Israel had suffered as a just punishment for her sins. Habakkuk, to be sure, raises a question. Why should an evil foreign nation be allowed to go on continually mistreating righteous Israel?[4] But he solves the question in the old way: Yahweh will

[1] 1:15. This is generally regarded as exilic or postexilic; see J. M. P. Smith, "Int. Crit. Com.," *Micah*, etc., pp. 269, 306 f. The criticism of Nahum recorded above is true, even if these verses are not his own.

[2] If 1:2-8 may be regarded as authentic.

[3] Amos and Hosea prophesy against the northern kingdom. Micah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah against Judah. Whether Habakkuk spoke against Assyria or Judah is uncertain, but the grounds of judgment are moral, as they are not in Nahum. Buttenwieser, *Prophets of Israel*, p. xxi, says, "The Book of Nahum is an example . . . of the national chauvinistic prophecy, the representatives of which the true prophets never tired of denouncing."

[4] 1:12-17.

eventually punish the oppressor. Only Second Isaiah strikes out into a new path. He feels that his people have suffered beyond their deserts. "She hath received of Yahweh's hand double for all her sins.[1] How then shall he answer Israel when she complains, "My way is hid from Yahweh, and the justice due me is passed away from my God"?[2] He includes in this thought the older solutions, that Yahweh has punished them for their sins[3] and that he will more than recompense them for all their sufferings by the glorious abundance and power that should be theirs in the new era that was just ahead, and he presents these old answers with a beauty and power of language that is almost unmatched in the whole Bible. But his great contribution to the history of religious thought is in his representation of Israel as prepared by her humiliation and suffering to become the messenger of Yahweh to the nations.

> "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law."[4]
>
> "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[5]

This classical statement of the value of vicarious suffering struck no responsive chord in the hearts of the

[1] 40:2.
[2] 40:27.
[3] 42:23-25.
[4] 42:1-4.
[5] 53:12.

prophet's contemporaries, so far as literature has left us evidence. They were glad to listen to his glowing predictions of restoration. Perhaps because these were not fulfilled, they were slow to accept the new interpretation of the meaning of suffering and of the purpose of Yahweh in manifesting himself through disaster and catastrophe. It bore no fruit till Jesus found in it the meaning of his own and all life.[1]

III. The Objects of Yahweh's Wrath

The prophets' horizons depended upon historical circumstances. The sins of Israel and Judah almost wholly occupy the attention of the four earliest prophets. They were too much concerned with their great task of giving a living, ethical interpretation to religion and especially to the current conception of the day of Yahweh, to stop to denounce the evils to be found in other nations, unless their immediate object demanded it.[2] But the question must eventually be answered as to what Yahweh, in his great day, would do with all the nations whom, according to the prophetic view, he was now using to punish Israel. It was difficult to bring the preprophetic, popular expectation of a world catastrophe into consistency with the prophetic view of the day of Yahweh as a historical event. Amos and Isaiah use the language that belongs to world catastrophe and speak of Yahweh's punishment of other nations without making any connection between the two. Zephaniah and Jeremiah make the day of Yahweh to include all nations.

> "Therefore wait for me, saith Yahweh, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms,

[1] Cp. G. C. Workman, *The Secret of Jehovah* (London, 1907); Knudson, *Relig. Teachings of the OT*, pp. 282 ff.; Robinson, *Relig. Ideas of the OT*, pp. 176 f.

[2] It was demanded in Am. 1 and 2 and in Is. 15-18 and 20.

> to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. . . . For he will make and end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the earth."[1]
>
> "A noise shall come even to the end of the earth; for Yahweh hath a controversy with the nations; he will enter into judgment with all flesh: as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword, saith Yahweh."[2]

In this world judgment Judah is included. She must suffer for her sins. But the nations that act as the instruments of Yahweh's wrath must also receive their due.[3]

In the earlier prophets judgment is indiscriminate, it is pronounced upon the whole people. Religion and morality were national affairs for Amos, Hosea, and Micah, and the impending punishment is likewise a community matter.[4] Yahweh says to Amos,

> "Smite the capitals, that the thresholds may shake; and break them in pieces on the head of all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: there shall not one of them flee away, and there shall not one of them escape. Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall my hand take them; and though they climb up to Heaven, thence I will bring them down."[5]

According to Zephaniah, Yahweh says,

> "I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground. I will consume man and beast . . . and I will cut off man from off the face of the ground."[6]

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[1] Zeph. 3:8 and 1:18, in the last translating *erec* by "earth" as the EVV do in 3:8.

[2] Jer. 25:31.

[3] Cp. Zeph. 1:4; 3:1-5; Jer. 1:15; 2:2, etc.

[4] Cp. Badè, *The OT in the Light of Today*, pp. 83 ff.; Knudson, *Beacon Lights of Prophecy* (New York, 1914), pp. 67 f.; *Relig. Teachings of the OT*, pp. 316-350.

[5] 9:1 f.; cp. Hos. 9:11-16; Is. 6:11 ff.; Mic. 2:3 ff.

[6] 1:2 f.; cp. Jer. 4:25.

Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk could see little discrimination on behalf of the righteous by those scourges of God, the Scythians, the Medes, and the Chaldeans. And the language of world catastrophe, which the prophets adopted from popular eschatology, left little place for any thought of preferential treatment of the true worshippers of Yahweh. It appeared that all alike were to be overwhelmed with the faithless nation.

In Isaiah's doctrine of a remnant we first find clearly enunciated the expectation that some are to escape the great catastrophe.[1] Amos speaks of a remnant that shall escape destruction, "as the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear,"[2] only to emphasize the completeness of the calamity that shall ensue. And Isaiah in one place likens those that shall remain to the gleanings from the harvest.[3] Elsewhere he says,

> "A remnant shall return,
> a remnant of Jacob unto the mighty God.
> Even though thy people be as the sands of the sea,
> a mere remnant of them shall return;
> destruction is unalterably decreed,
> sweeping in righteousness like a flood.
> For an unalterable decree of destruction
> the Lord, God Sabaoth, shall execute on the whole land."[4]

Even the name which Isaiah gave his son, Shear-jashub, "a remnant shall return," may have been intended to emphasize "remnant" rather than "return." "This name,

[1] Evidences for a belief in the salvation of a remnant in earlier Hebrew literature are very slight; I Kg. 19:18; Am. 5:15 (cp. "remnant of Baal," Zeph. 1:4); see Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 229-238; Knudson, *Relig. Teachings of the OT*, pp. 335 f.; Buttenwieser, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 258 ff.

[2] 3:12.

[3] 24:13; 6:11 ff.; 17:4 ff.

[4] 10:21 ff., translation quoted from Buttenwieser, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 261.

as Marti points out, implies a confirmation rather than a denial of the judgment. It signifies, however, that the remnant, i. e., the survivors of the judgment, shall become converted."[1] Isaiah goes no farther than this, according to many scholars, who regard those passages which explicitly differentiate between the future lot of the good and the bad as later interpolations. Jeremiah, like Isaiah, is not clear on this point, except in passages which, for various reasons, are considered by many to be editorial additions.[2] Yet, even more than Isaiah, his outlook implies individual morality and religion and, therefore, a discrimination in the objects of Yahweh's wrath.[3]

It is not until we reach Ezekiel that we find these ideas coming clearly to expression. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. . . . The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."[4] Accordingly, in Ezekiel's prophecies more clearly than in any previous writer, we have the doctrine of a righteous remnant who shall hear his message and profit thereby. To be sure, the whole house of Israel is repeatedly characterized as rebellious.[5] The entire nation is to suffer the vengeance of Yahweh,[6] yet a remnant shall be saved.[7] There are those who will hear the prophet's word,[8] and Yahweh will search out his own sheep, judging between sheep and sheep.[9] Ezekiel thus lays the foundation for that apocalyptic sectarian-

[1] Buttenwieser, *op. cit.*, p. 259; Marti, *Das Buch Jesaia* on ch. 6:3.
[2] Such passages are Is. 1:25, 27 f.; Jer. 31:29-34. It is not at all unlikely that the new reading of Israel's eschatology may rescue them.
[3] Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 100 f.; Badè, *OT in Light of Today*, pp. 165 f., 277 f.
[4] Ez. 18:4-20. The whole chapter is an excellent exposition of individual responsibility.
[5] Ez. 2:3; 3:5-8, 27; 5:5 f.
[6] 5:8-12.
[7] 6:8; not all are righteous.
[8] 3:21:27.
[9] 34:12, 17.

ism, or class consciousness, which played so important a part in later Jewish eschatology.[1]

In the thought of the people the day of Yahweh was to come only upon the enemies of Israel. The prophets in the beginning declared that its results would be as untoward for Israel as for any of their neighbors. They go still farther, to say that Yahweh is aiding the Assyrians and the Babylonians and the Persians in their task of punishment. When at length the punishment was carried out in the Exile, while the nations, which had sinned as Israel had sinned, and far worse, escaped, there was but one conclusion left. The day of Yahweh was yet to come upon the other nations.

As an exile in Babylon, Ezekiel lived through the decade from the first captivity (597) to the destruction of Jerusalem by the army of Nebuchadnezzar in 586. He and his fellow captives were probably, on the whole, well off, and Ezekiel could view the sufferings of his countrymen in Judea with some degree of detachment. From the time of his first prophecy in 592,[2] until the fall of the city, he declaimed against his people and his land with true prophetic vehemence, sometimes vigorously opposed by others of his fellow exiles.[3] Finally events vindicated his prevision, and the city was overthrown. Then, after Israel had suffered for her sins, Ezekiel has a new message.

> "Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. . . . And they shall know that I am Yahweh their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them;

[1] See below, pp. 93 ff., 114.
[2] Ez. 1:2.
[3] 13:1, 8, 16 f., 23.

> for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Yahweh."[1]

Because the nations have gloried over the misfortunes of the city of Yahweh, he turns against them. They are to suffer, while Judah prospers in miraculous fashion.[2] The words of Second Isaiah exactly express the feeling of Ezekiel:

> "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Yahweh's hand double for all her sins. . . . Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, that hast drunk at the hand of Yahweh the cup of his wrath. . . . Thus saith thy Lord Yahweh . . . Behold, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of staggering, even the bowl of the cup of my wrath; thou shalt no more drink it again: and I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee."[3]

The ground is here laid for a return to that Jewish particularism which appears in some of the later prophets and apocalyptists. It became the firm belief of the leaders of the nation and gave to the people that hardness of temper against which Jesus protested and which led finally to the great rebellion against Rome in which the Holy City was destroyed.

Ezekiel, as we have seen above,[4] believed in a glorious future for Israel, to be clouded only by an attack of the nations under Gog of the land of Magog. This attack was to end in ignominious defeat for their enemies, in a new "day of Yahweh." Thus the day of Yahweh becomes a day of wrath only for the enemies of Israel. In three particulars, then, Ezekiel returns to the old

[1] Ez. 39:25-29.
[2] Ez. 25:3 f., 8 f., 12 f.; 26:2 f.
[3] Is. 40:1 f.; 51:17-23; cp. the oracles against the nations in Jer. 45-51.
[4] See p. 65.

popular notion of the "day." It is postponed into the indefinite future, it is made unhistorical and mythological, and it is directed only against the enemies of Israel.

IV. After the Day of Yahweh

The discussion of the teachings of the pre-exilic prophets on the subject of the final outcome, when the day of wrath had passed, is clouded by uncertainty. In each of the four great prophets of the eighth century there are passages which paint in glowing terms the future restoration of the Hebrew nation to power and prosperity.[1] Many of these passages are regarded by excellent scholars as coming from exilic or post-exilic editors of the prophetic books.[2] Amos, for example, predicts dooms and only doom for his people through his whole prophecy until we come to the last eight verses. Then suddenly he begins to speak of raising up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, rebuilding ruins, bringing back the captivity of the people, promising that they shall no more be plucked out of their land. Such language seems only intelligible in the mouth of one who is living during or after the ruin and captivity have come to pass.

Admitting the possibility of similar additions and interpolations in the other pre-exilic prophets, we must nevertheless conclude that a considerable portion of the hopeful, or "promising" passages are authentic. We have already seen that many other nations had harbored such hopes

[1] Am. 9:8-15; Hos. 1:10-2:1; 2:14-23; 3:1-5; 5:15-6:3; 10:12; 11:8-11; 13:14a; 14:1-9; Mic. 4-7; Is. 1:24-29; 2:2-4; 4:2-6; 9:1-7; 11:1-9; 11:10-12:6; 19:18-25.

[2] It is said that these four were prophets solely of doom, regarding the day of Yahweh as "very dark and no brightness in it." (Am. 5:20). Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 83 f., admits great uncertainty on the subject, but "has elected to follow the conclusions of the more advanced critics," such as Volz, who dedicated a book to the subject (*Die vorexilische Jahvehprophetie u. der Messias*, Göttingen, 1897) with entirely negative conclusions.

and that they seem to have been a part of popular Hebrew eschatology before the time of the literary prophets. If the latter reject them, it is not because they are popular, but because they are immoral in their effects. But this cannot be maintained. Quite the contrary; an ethical message which holds out no hope of repentance and pardon is unthinkable.[1] In their conception of the purpose of the day of Yahweh and the objects of the divine wrath, the prophets ethicized the national eschatology. Their conception of the remnant almost inevitably involved a happy future for those who were saved from the storm. It seems to me, therefore, that we must go farther than Gray in his commentary on Isaiah and say not merely that "the belief in a glorious future does not prove a passage unauthentic,"[2] but rather that the burden of proof has been shifted and it must in every case be proved on other grounds that the hopeful passage is unauthentic.[3] The following discussion is based on passages that seem to be unassailable.

In the popular hopes of an age of glorious prosperity after the day of Yahweh, the prophets found material well fitted for their moral propaganda. But in order that the doctrine of the new age might have ethical significance, that there might be in its promise any lure away from the existing evil conditions of society toward a righteous social order, they were compelled to eliminate the popular idea of a cosmic catastrophe as ushering in the Age of Gold, and interpret the day of Yahweh as a historical event, a social catastrophe, while to the popular

[1] E. L. Curtis, *Am. Journal of Theol.*, IV 4 (Oct., 1900), p. 829, "A prophet of Jehovah preaching a hopeless message is to us a contradiction."

[2] "Int. Crit. Com.", *Isaiah* I xciv ff.

[3] On the radical side see Harper, "Int. Crit. Com.", "*Amos and Hosea*, pp. cxlvii, clix ff.; Marti, *Dodekapropheton*, p. 9 f.; H. P. Smith, *Religion of Israel*, pp. 144 f., 161; more "conservative" are Steuernagel, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Tübingen, 1912), and Horton and Whitehouse, *The Minor Prophets* and *Isaiah* in the "New Century Bible."

hope or material prosperity they added their ideals of righteousness. If Isaiah adopts the popular mythological expectation of a transformation of nature which should render even the wolf and the leopard and the adder friendly to man,[1] he believes that man also must be transformed. Yahweh says,

> "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. . . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. . . . I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy sin."[2]

This same idea, that man must be transformed before he can enjoy the new order, underlies the famous "new covenant" passage in Jeremiah, the spirituality and appositeness of which made it so attractive and useful to New Testament writers.

> "Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it."[3]

Whether these passages may be ascribed to Isaiah and Jeremiah or not, they are sufficient evidence that there were seers in ancient Israel who understood the relation of spiritual to social progress and to whom the day of Yahweh meant, not an outward and mechanical interposition, but an inner and spiritual change.

Though the prophets use the language of popular mythology, we are not to suppose that they thought the age to follow the day of Yahweh would be literally like the ancient Paradise. We have to reckon here with oriental hyperbole. Many an Egyptian and Babylonian writer

[1] 11:6-9.
[2] Is. 1:16, 18, 25; cp. Ez. 36:25 ff.
[3] Jer. 31:31, 33; cp. Lk. 22:20; I Co. 11:25; II Co. 3:6, Heb. 8:6-13.

ascribes to the newly enthroned monarch all possible divine qualities, and proclaims him as the one who will bring about a return to Edenic conditions.[1] We must make due allowance for courtly flattery in the psalms and the prophets.[2] Yet it is evident that these writers believed in the possibility of realizing social righteousness upon all the earth in the reign of some future scion of the Davidic house, who would also be a real son of God. We cannot be wrong in thinking that the conception which Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah had of the future age is indicated by their criticism of the social evils of their own generation. Just as the prophets down to Second Isaiah give their attention to developing the ethical content and universal scope of the day of Yahweh, so do they also to the new age that should succeed it.

That Israel's hopes for the future centered exclusively around some individual, some messiah, we must not suppose.[3] Contrary to the modern popular idea, the messiah played no essential part in the Hebrew hope of the future. From the earliest times the Israelite had thought of God as his king, as did his neighbors.[4] It does not appear that the human king was regarded as in any sense a rival of Yahweh, but rather as his representative, until the kings proved themselves oppressive and incapable and thus roused dissatisfaction and revolt. Since, however, there developed a strong sense of the contrast between Yahweh and the gods of the surrounding nations, especially Moloch, whose very name means "king," there was a tendency in Israel to drop the title in referring to Yahweh. It occurs very rarely before the Exile.

To one who believed in the Davidic dynasty, as the

[1] See Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 250-259; and above pp. 57 f.

[2] Ps. 2:6-9; 72; Is. 9:6 f.; 11:1-5.

[3] The use of "messianic" to describe the hopes of the Hebrews perpetuates this misapprehension. "Eschatological" may sound pedantic to the layman, but it is much more accurate.

[4] Robinson, *Religious Ideas of the OT*, 193 ff.

Judean prophets did, it was most natural that the future age of glory and righteousness should be thought of as under the rule of some member of the royal house. Making allowance for the flattery of "court style," the language of Isaiah 4:2; 9:6 f.; 11:1-10, is entirely possible to the prophet who could in his old age proclaim the inviolability of Jerusalem,[1] and who was probably a favorite in the court of the righteous king, Hezekiah. So also Jeremiah, who had lived through the reign of Josiah, could use effectively his faith in the "righteous Branch" who should be raised up unto David to darken by way of contrast his picture of the wickedness of Josiah's sons.[2] This expected ideal king has no connection with the superhuman messiah of later apocalyptic literature. Allowing for prophetic imagination and court style, we need find nothing in these passages that points to more than the hope that a descendant worthy of David would eventually arise to bring about all the reforms that the prophets had expected and urged, as Hezekiah and Josiah had in part at least attempted to do.[3] The prophets believed that after the great judgment and purification of the day of Yahweh, this would be entirely possible.

Other prophets, whose contact with the royal administration had been less fortunate, took a different view of the situation. Some, like Amos and Micah, address their complaints in general against the leaders and rulers, the aristocracy, of every sort, without specific criticism. Some, like Hosea,[4] thought of the kingship as a punishment upon a nation that had turned away from Yahweh. This is the attitude reflected in the secondary account of

[1] Is. 37.

[2] Jer. 23:1-8.

[3] Gressmann, *loc. cit.*, does not seem to me to prove his thesis that a superhuman messiah was in the mind of Isaiah in chaps. 7, 9, and 11.

[4] 13:11.

the establishment of Saul as king,[1] where he is represented as usurping Yahweh's place. In Ezekiel Yahweh says, "My servant David shall be king over them, . . . their prince forever."[2] Yet his constitution for the Utopia that was to arise in Judea after the Exile makes the government thoroughly sacerdotal, with the prince a mere appendage or servant to the priest.[3] Here again Ezekiel stands as the first representative of new tendencies that were to prevail in post-exilic Judaism, which, claiming to be a theocracy, was in reality, of course, a hierocracy.

Over against the hope of a rejuvenation of the Davidic line, there stands, therefore, the conception of God alone as king in Israel. This idea, implicit in Israel's religion before the Exile, comes to the fore with the decline and downfall of the royal line. The phrase "kingdom of God," to be sure, is not found in the Old Testament, but in exilic and postexilic times the idea becomes more and more prominent. Not the least important evidence of its development is to be found in Second Isaiah. The Davidic line is not once referred to. Instead,

> "Behold, the Lord Yahweh will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. . . . Thus saith Yahweh, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: . . . I am Yahweh, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King."[4]

One might readily suppose such lines to be written in intentional opposition to a scheme for the re-enthronement of Zerubbabel, or some other royal prince.[5] So far from a Davidic messiah being expected, Cyrus is Yah-

[1] I Sam. 8; 10:17-27; 12; cp. Jud. 8:22 f. Such passages belong to Hosea's century or later.
[2] 37:24 f.
[3] Ez. 40-48.
[4] Is. 40:10; 43:14, 15; cp. 41:21.
[5] See below, pp. 90 f.

weh's anointed.[1] Yahweh's servant *par excellence* is Israel as a group; there is nowhere a reference to any individual Israelite as ruler or leader of that group. Yahweh's servant Israel, purified through his sufferings, is to bring all the earth to know Yahweh as king and to rejoice in the freedom and glory of his government of the earth.[2] Thus Second Isaiah believes that the day of Yahweh is passed and that the new age is already begun, with its new mission for Israel. If all Israel had really been purified by the fires of exilic suffering and had been able to take his richly spiritual view of the coming of Yahweh's kingdom, his vision might in a certain sense have been realized. But the fullness of the time had not yet come. He had no real successor. We have to go on to study the devious windings of Jewish eschatology during the five centuries that intervened before the coming of Jesus.

V. The Prophetic Contribution

The prophetic contribution, then, to the Hebrew doctrine of the future was manifold. From one standpoint the great work of Israel's seers was the reinterpretation of popular eschatology in the light of morality and history. They brought the day of Yahweh down out of the dim twilight of mythology into the daylight of history. They made it a matter of morality rather than of unthinking patriotism. It was to be a time of punishment for Israel, a vindication, not of Israel, but of Yahweh, a revelation, not of their greatness, but of his power and righteousness.[3] In trying to understand its purpose and results, some of them at least were led to a new conception of individual religion and moral responsibility on the one hand, and of Yahweh's relation to the whole of mankind on the other. With the development in Jeremiah and

[1] 44:28; 45:1.
[2] 42:5-9.
[3] Ez. 36:22-31.

Ezekiel of the conception of individual, as over against collective, morality, the idea came to the fore that only the purified remnant of Israel would escape the destruction of the day of Yahweh. With the development of monotheism came the belief that Yahweh would discriminate between the righteous and the wicked of other nations also, and that all the good, of whatever nation, would share in the glories of the new age.

Finally one great prophet at least came to see in the Exile not merely a punishment for sin, but also a preparation for service to the whole world. In their efforts to peer beyond the great catastrophe into the new era that should follow, two opposite, but not contradictory, ideas came to the surface, the anticipation of a renewed kingdom of David, and the hope of a real reign of God on earth. Thus the prophets prepared the way for the belief in God as an immanent spiritual presence guiding the affairs of history and filling the hearts of men.

CHAPTER IV

NEW PROBLEMS AND NEW SOLUTIONS

I. Disappointed Hopes: Politics and Apocalypticism

THEIR history during the six centuries following the Exile brought out the prophetic spirits in Judaism[1] a constant succession of new problems. The situation at the end of the Exile made for the dreaming of dreams. Just as men expected a new era after the Napoleonic wars,[2] just as during the latter years of the great war now at an end we looked forward to a glorious period of reconstruction, so the faithful remnants of the true worshippers of Yahweh who outlived the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation to Babylon looked for a restoration after "seventy years," which should more than compensate for all they had suffered.[3]

Ezekiel is to proclaim to the people,

> "Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: . . . I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. . . . And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. . . . And I will call for the grain, and

[1] The term "Judaism" is used to distinguish the postexilic civilization of the race, and Hebrew for the preexilic.

[2] See above, p. 4 f.

[3] See Jer. 25:11 f.; 29:10; Is. 23:15, 17.

> will multiply it. . . . And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations."[1]

More than that, as the "suffering servant" of Yahweh, Israel had borne the griefs and carried the sorrows of the world. Now God will divide her a portion with the great, and she shall divide the spoil with the strong. She will not fail nor be discouraged till she have set justice in the earth, and the isles shall wait for her law.[2] Such was the glorious vision of world-wide service which God put into the heart of the Great Unknown, the most "evangelical" of the Old Testament prophets. The overthrow and humiliation of her archenemy Babylon, prophesied in Is. 13, 14 and Jer. 50, 51 as Cyrus began his victorious career, seemed to promise a new era. These political disturbances could bring only advantage and enlargement to the little nations suffering under the heel of Babylonian oppression. As Assyria and Babylonia had come "out of the north" to punish Israel for her sins, so Persia came to restore her, now purified by suffering, to her rightful position of leadership.

How miserably the little community in Judea after the Return failed to realize these magnificent ideals! We cannot understand the development of Jewish expectations of the coming of the messianic kingdom without observing the effect upon it of the nation's political fortunes. The whole period from the Return in 538 B. C. to the rebellion of Bar-Cochba in 135 A. D. may be best understood as a succession of disappointed hopes. The expectations of the returning exiles, which had probably been moulded by Ezekiel's elaborate theocratic Utopia, may be seen clearly reflected in Second Isaiah. Twenty years later, as Haggai and Zechariah show us, these expectations had not been at all realized, yet, on the occasion of

[1] Ez. 36:22-31.
[2] Is. 53:4, 12; 42:4.

the disturbances which closed Cambyses' reign, they blaze up again as ardent as before. Even the Temple had not been rebuilt.[1] Yet these prophets are animated by a new hope: Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judea, are two anointed ones under whom the glories of David's kingdom are to be revived.[2] Did the heavy hand of a Persian satrap crush these ambitions before they blossomed? We do not know, but Malachi, Ezra, and Nehemiah show how far they came from realization. Ezra and Nehemiah introduced the Law, hoping thereby to prepare Israel for her glorious mission; but again there came no transformation in the outward conditions of the nation. How often during the next two hundred and fifty years the national hopes flamed up, history has not recorded. Probably each generation could tell its tale of uprisings.

Yet, outwardly, there never came a time, from the Return in 538 to the Maccabean uprising in 168 B. C., when any ambitious expectation on the part of the Jews would seem to have been justified. The city was small and without military, commercial, or political importance. In spite of the fact that, much of the time, civil and ecclesiastical power centered in the high priest as the head of the nation and its representative in all foreign affairs, the Temple was insignificant and unattractive, the worship of Yahweh frequently neglected, and the pious Jews who kept the Law were few, and had to suffer, not only from the heathen round about, but also from the rich and powerful among their compatriots, who were usually ungodly.

This inglorious period was brought to a close by the efforts of Antiochus Epiphanes, their Syrian over-lord, to blot out the Jewish racial and religious distinctiveness.

[1] Kohler, *Jewish Theology* (New York, 1918), p. 373, refers Ps. 80: 15 f.; 74 (?); 89:40-46, to this time of disappointment.

[2] Hag. 2:1-9, 20-23; Zech. 3-4; 6:9-15; see Kent, *Makers and Teachers of Judaism* ("Historical Bible," New York, 1911), pp. 50 f.

His persecutions brought about the revolt of the priest Mattathias and his three sons, Judas Maccabeus, Jonathan, and Simon, whose sufferings and exploits constitute this period one of the most glorious in the whole history of the race. Simon's son, John Hyrcanus, was hailed by enthusiastic admirers as prophet, priest, and king, and thus combining all the highest of the age-long ideals of his people.[1] To many it appeared that the sufferings of the pious in the persecutions of Antiochus and the wars for freedom had actually fulfilled the ancient prophecies of the woes of the day of Yahweh, and that now the new age had begun. But the next two generations of the dynasty showed such unendurable cruelty and despotism, or such puerile weakness, that its representatives were hailed as monsters that devoured the people.[2] Their reigns seemed to be ushering in the last woes rather than the messianic age, for they persecuted and slaughtered the righteous Pharisees. When, at length, their jealousies and quarrels and incapacity brought about the Roman conquest and the rule of the Idumean Antipater and his son Herod, the execration of the pious knew no bounds. No effort to realize the national hopes could have begun more splendidly, none could have failed more ignominiously.

With the Maccabean fiasco in mind, it is easy to appreciate the situation of official Judaism in Jesus' day. After such a lesson no pious and thoughtful Jew could expect the kingdom of God to come by military or political measures. The logic of events, the bitterness of repeated disappointments, drove them for an hundred years to complete distrust of human efforts. If the kingdom of God was to be realized on earth, it must be by some entirely supernatural interference with the course of history. Belonging mainly to the middle and upper classes of society

[1] Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs; Levi, 8:11-15; 18:2-13; Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiii 10, 7; *War* i 2, 8; Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, p. 187.

[2] Test. XII Patr., Judah 21:7; 22:1 f.

and being therefore fairly comfortable, the Pharisees did not feel keenly the pressure of political oppression and social injustice. It is a significant fact that no reference to the kingdom of God has been handed down from any Jewish rabbi of the time of Jesus. They were interested in the law, not in the coming of a new day. The Sadducee, likewise, was satisfied with the *status quo,* just as is the modern politician, so long as nothing interferes with his perquisites. As is usually the case, it was among the lower-middle and under classes that the sense of social wrongs and the passion for reform made itself felt.

It was most natural that the longing for social justice should find its means of expression in the apocalyptic movement. The prophets had proclaimed the coming of the terrible day of Yahweh to punish the nation for its sins against the poor and the needy, the widow and the fatherless.[1] All through the dark days after the Exile the pious had suffered from the oppression, not merely of their heathen neighbors, but also, and perhaps more bitterly, from their own unscrupulous fellow-countrymen. Again and again in the Psalms they voice their complaint and cry to Yahweh for relief.

> "Why standest thou afar off, O Yahweh?
> Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?
> In the pride of the wicked the poor is hotly pursued.
> . . . . . .
> He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages;
> In the secret places doth he murder the innocent.
> . . . . . .
> He lieth in wait to catch the poor.
> . . . . . .
> And the helpless fall by his strong ones.
> . . . . . .
> Arise, O Yahweh; O God, lift up thy hand:

[1] Am. 2:6; 4:1; 5:7; Is. 1:16 f.; Mic. 2:1 f.; 8 f.; 3:1-4; Jer. 7:5 ff.; 5:28; Ez. 18:5-18; 22:7, 29; Mal. 3:5.

Forget not the poor.

. . . . . .

Break thou the arm of the wicked.

. . . . . .

Yahweh, thou hast heard the desire of the meek:
Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear;
To judge the fatherless and the oppressed,
That man who is of the earth may be terrible no more."[1]

The Psalms of Solomon, written probably a generation before the birth of Jesus, complain continually of the "sinners" who assail the "righteous" in their insolence, but express the fullest confidence that God cares for the latter and will eventually "raise up unto them their king, the son of David," who will rule in righteousness to the destruction of their enemies and the great good fortune of Israel.[2] Likewise the Assumption of Moses, written during the lifetime of Jesus, complains that the rulers of Israel, probably the Sadducees, are "destructive and impious . . . treacherous men, self-pleasers, gluttons, gourmands . . . devourers of the goods of the poor, saying that they do so on the grounds of their justice."[3]

The apocalyptic movement in Judaism, then, was in opposition to the officials of the nation. The language we have just quoted, as well as the character of their beliefs, shows that the Sadducees had no sympathy with it. Official Pharisaism is also excluded by the nature of its interests[4] and by the absence of any evidence of their attention to the matter. It was among the people, suffering under the misgovernment and economic explcitation of their for-

[1] Ps. 10:1-18, accord to Briggs ("Int. Crit. Com.", *Psalms* I 68 ff.), originally a prayer for rescue from foreign oppressors, of the Persian period. See also Ps. 37; 43; 107:39-42; 109:21-31; 113:5-8; 147:2-6.

[2] See especially chap. 17.

[3] 7:1-6.

[4] See below, pp. 140 ff.

eign over-lords and Sadducean or Herodian rulers, that fertile soil was found for the development of the spirit of discontent and revolution. As in Latin countries dissatisfaction finds vent in armed revolution, in Russia in soviet government, in English speaking countries in conventions, resolutions, and elections, so among the Jews the one natural expression was in apocalyptic movements.

Men who are suffering deeply find it hard to wait for God's own good time. They tend to believe that, if they match their prayers with effort, God will the sooner intervene. And so there were among the Jews constantly increasing unrest and numerous popular uprisings under pretended messiahs—the so-called Zelotic movements, always opposed by the Sadducees and Pharisees and put down by Rome with an iron hand. Official Judaism rejected the social question;[1] with it they rejected and tried to suppress its chief expression, the apocalyptic movement.

In A. D. 66 the inevitable happened. Pure repression without constructive statesmanship worked its customary result. Goaded by a series of tactless, incompetent, or cruel and rapacious procurators, the people put their theology to the test. The limit of endurance had been reached; God must intervene to save his people. Popular sentiment swept even many of the Pharisees into the great revolt against Rome. It would seem that the terrible defeat which the nation suffered, the destruction of the city and Temple and the cessation of the sacrifices, would have convinced the most bigoted that the political type of messianic hope was entirely mistaken. No doubt many did learn the lesson. Yet a generation later the Jews of the Diaspora rose against Rome—and were savagely punished. Again, after another short generation,

[1] L. Wallis, *Sociological Sudy of the Bible* (Chicago, 1912), pp. 216 ff. This judgment is not touched by the excellent, but meager sayings of Hillel, cp. Kent, *Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus* (New York, 1917), pp. 166 ff.; contrast John the Baptist.

under an adventurer who called himself Bar-Cochba, "son of the star," and who was hailed by the great Rabbi Akiba as messiah, there came another Jewish revolt, as bitter and as severely punished as that of 66-70. It was the last, dying gasp; hereafter official Judaism, as represented by the rabbis and the Talmud, gave up political ambitions entirely, dreamed little of the return of the Golden Age, and saw few millennial visions. Suffering, hope, disappointment, these three words, repeated again and again, record the history of Judaism from the Exile to Bar-Cochba. To this period of almost continual suffering, of alternate hope and despair, belong the Jewish visions and revelations that prepared for Jesus' proclamation of the coming kingdom of God.

Apocalyptic literature is at once the cause and the product of these disappointed hopes. On the one hand it held out the promise of an impossible ideal future, a promise sworn by God himself. The tragic consequences of this hope are seen in the three great Jewish uprisings against Rome and the countless minor ones. On the other hand, these books were the outcome of despair. They were written to hearten a people that was suffering to the limit of endurance, to promise them that their tortures should last but a little longer, to encourage them to hold out to the end, when God would intervene to punish their oppressors and give them all that heart could wish. They come, not out of times of prosperity and peace, but of war and disturbance.[1] Some are stormy petrels, omens of coming disaster, others are the vultures that gloat and gorge as the evil passes over the land. Apocalypticism was a counsel of despair.

Such was the relation of political history to the development of apocalypticism. We turn now to study the effect of the religious development of Judaism upon its eschatology.

[1] See above, p. 5, quotation from Dewey.

II. The Effect of their Religious Development Upon the Hopes of the Jews

As to the inner development of Judaism during this period, that is, the development of its moral and religious thinking, the details are obscure, but certain great facts stand out as the arches of the bridge of the centuries. The most significant of these are the canonization of the Law and of the whole Old Testament, and the development of the eschatological hope. Around these two complementary ideas, the Law and the coming kingdom, centers practically all the literature which has been preserved from this period. We are concerned with the literature that has to do with the coming kingdom; but we must note how the canonization of the Law affected both the form and content of apocalyptic literature.

After a most interesting history, Jewish law crystalized into the form which we find in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible,[1] about 450 B. C. Under the priestly influence of Ezra and others like him, with the aid of such lay administrators as Nehemiah and prophets like Malachi, the Law, substantially as we now have it, was forced upon the Jewish communities in Egypt, Babylonia, and Palestine in the latter part of the fifth century before Christ.[2] These five books were thought to contain a sufficient and authoritative revelation of the will of God. The one duty of the true Israelite was to study and understand it fully and obey it unreservedly. Therefore scribism gave itself unremittingly to the interpretation and inculcation of the Law, and the Jewish people

[1] See the discussions of the Pentateuch or Hexateuch in the Introductions of Driver, McFadyen, Gray, and others.

[2] In proof of this we have the accounts of Ezra-Nehemiah, written a century or so later on the basis of personal memoirs, now remarkably attested by contemporary documents in the Aramic papyri from Elephantine. See Meyer, *Das Papyrusfund von Elephantine*, (Leipzig, 1912), pp. 67-75, Robinson, *Relig. Ideas of the OT*, p. 137, n. 1.

for the most part accepted the scribes as their religious teachers.[1] It was quite a lawyer-like reverence for the small technicalities of law which gave to Pharisaic legalism those characteristics which Jesus so unsparingly criticized. Jewish legalism was fundamentally incapable of grasping the great social and religious ideals of the Prophets and was thus constitutionally, although unwittingly, opposed to the larger hope of the coming kingdom.

The greater part, and the best part, of the Old Testament was written before the acceptance of the Law under Ezra. During the next three hundred years the remainder was written, and the whole received its present form. During this period also a definite doctrine of inspiration arose. It was generally agreed that "prophecy never came by human impulse, it was when carried away by the holy Spirit that the holy men of God spoke," and that "all scripture is inspired by God."[2] It was also generally agreed that God had given his message to the world through the ancient lawgivers and prophets, and that the Spirit no longer spoke to men. The prophetic voice was stilled. So sure is the anonymous writer of Zechariah 13 of this (about 200 B. C.) that he believes that any one who claims to prophesy is a deceiver, and suggests that "his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth."[3] About 200 B. C. the prophetic canon was closed. Judaism is no longer a living faith, but a book religion; even Daniel receives new revelations by the study of ancient prophets.[4]

Accordingly, it was believed that only books which had come down from the ancients, from the times when God still spoke to men, were really inspired. While there was fair unanimity in the opinion that those we now

[1] Charles, *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments* (New York, n. d.), pp. 39 f.

[2] II Pt. 1:21; II Ti. 3:16.

[3] V. 3; cp. I Mac. 4:46; 9:27.

[4] Dan. 9:1 f.

have in the Old Testament belong in this category, there were many other writings, some of them short fugitive pieces, some of them large books, which seemed to many to have equal claim to a place in the sacred literature of the race. On the whole, the Jewish people dealt wisely, though somewhat blindly, with these difficult questions, and we have reason to be grateful that they selected so much, and omitted so little that was good. The most serious error in their principles of selection was this, that only the ancient was believed to be inspired. The inevitable result of this conception of inspiration was that new ideas, as such, were denied a hearing. No one dared to claim to exercise the prophetic gift, or to speak in the name of Yahweh. From Zechariah (B. C. 520) to Jesus there are, I believe, only two pieces of Palestinian Jewish literature the names of whose authors are known: Joel, about whom we know nothing else, and Jesus ben-Sira, whose book never got into the canon. The scribe of these times thus again found himself denied any active participation in the apocalyptic movement, while prophetic spirits would consciously or unconsciously find themselves out of sympathy with scribism and Pharisaism.

The development of Judaism was profoundly influenced by foreign civilizations. There never had been a time when the nation was completely isolated. But from the time of Ahaz, when it was caught in the maelstrom of world politics, this unique little people had to measure itself continually with the far richer and more imposing arts, sciences, literatures, philosophies, and religions of Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, and Greece. Being so much the poorer, it must borrow heavily and develop its own resources along lines either analogous or antagonistic to the ideas it met. In some instances it took the one attitude, in some the other. From the highly developed demonology, eschatology, and astrology of Babylonia and Persia the Jew borrowed many beliefs and practices, and especially the myths and other forms in which these ex-

pressed themselves. But that any of these superstitions were taken over and planted for the first time in virgin soil in the minds of the Jews of this age, we are not for a moment to suppose. As we have seen, there is sufficient evidence that there had been in preprophetic times a considerable body of myths regarding the day of Yahweh as a great world catastrophe and the return after it of the Golden Age, just as there were many survivals of ancient animism. The great prophetic leaders of the Hebrews kept these weeds down or modified their growth, until the tropical showers of Babylonian and Persian myths, accompanied by the loss of the prophetic spirit in Judaism, made them spring up until they almost hid the real grain. Jewish apocalypticism was a development of the old preprophetic views under the influence of these foreign civilizations.

No social movement fails to generate reactions. The legalism of Ezra and Nehemiah, well-intentioned as it was, constituted a reversion to the preprophetic trust in sacrifices and offerings. Apocalypticism was in part a protest. Yet, as we have just said, the influence of the religions of Babylonia and Persia tended to cause the apocalyptists to return to the preprophetic standpoint, for the foreign faiths represented much the same beliefs and practices as the old popular religion in Israel. When, in the third and second centuries, Greek influence became dominant, the nation at first accepted good and bad together, and, when with the Maccabees the great reaction against Hellenism set in, good and bad were rejected together. Except as represented by the Return and the exclusiveness of Ezra and Nehemiah, we know of no such reaction against oriental influences, partly because Judaism was itself oriental, partly because no monarch tried to force orientalism upon it as Antiochus Epiphanes did Hellenism. The net result of Pharisaic hatred for Greece and Rome was to make Judaism inhospitable toward all that was strange in western civilization, but to open the doors

to the demonological superstitions and the eschatological myths of popular Greek religion, which were fundamentally like those of the orient, for they were, indeed, partly oriental in origin. When one considers this combination of evil influences and the natural antipathy of legalism to much that is best in the apocalyptic literature, one wonders that, nevertheless, it was the agency which prevented the ancient prophetic spirit from dying out until Christianity came to revive it.

III. Jewish Visions and Revelations

On account, then, of these developments, especially the growing absorption of the nation in the study and observance of the Law and the conviction that God no longer spoke to men, the Jewish prophet of the time was compelled to put his ideas in writing and publish them anonymously, or, if he wished to be sure that large circles would heed them, to attach to them the name of some ancient saint, just as the Law was ascribed to Moses, the psalms to David, and wisdom literature to Solomon. That this literary falsification was conscious and intentional we cannot aver.[1] Much of the material that was used by the prophets of future woe and weal was borrowed from popular tradition, as we have seen in previous chapters, and may have been already circulating under ancient names. In any case, that age had not developed a sense of literary property. Whatever the extenuating circumstances, the fact is beyond dispute.

This anonymity or pseudonymity, the lack of the author's name or the ascription of a false name, is one of the distinctive marks of all the Jewish visions and revelations of this period. No living teacher dared claim the spirit of prophecy. Not until the messianic age would it return.[2] Daniel was commanded significantly to "shut

[1] Cp. Oesterley, *Apocrypha*, p. 200.

[2] Charles, *Religious Development*, pp. 43 f.

up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end,"[1] but, according to the Christian apocalypse, "the lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome to open the book and the seven seals thereof."[2] The Christian dispensation comes to fulfill the words of the older apocalyptist Joel, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy."[3] Then the Christian apocalyptist, instead of conjuring up some worthy of the past, dares speak in his own proper person, "I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus."[4]

The fact that the prophets of Judaism dared no longer speak out as such to their contemporaries made it necessary for them to adopt new literary types and forms. That which approved itself to the taste of the age is technically known as the "apocalypse," or *revelation,* because in it history, past and future, is portrayed under the guise of visions. Although they differ greatly among themselves, Daniel in the Old Testament and Revelation in the New are sufficiently characteristic to give a correct conception of the whole class. Instead of poems, addresses, and visions which concern themselves quite clearly with the immediate circumstances of the speaker and his hearer, as in the prophets, we find here a series of visions of the most bizarre and grotesque sort, which must later be interpreted to the seer by some heavenly messenger and which, even when so interpreted, are often more or less unintelligible to us. Animals often take the places of men

[1] Dan. 12:4, 9.

[2] Rev. 5:5.

[3] Joel 2:28; Ac. 2:17.

[4] Rev. 1:9. The book does not indicate what John was intended, for the readers well knew. Possibly the writer was John the son of Zebedee. In that case some other John wrote the Fourth Gospel and the first epistle.

in these nightmares; sheep stand for the Jewish people, who in this age are well symbolized as a helpless and harried flock; beasts, rams, and he-goats stand for the nations that oppress Israel, their horns typifying particular kings or princes; the men of these visions are angels who carry God's messages and execute his will like a king's soldiers; and the dragons are demonic powers of evil arrayed against God, his angels, and his people.[1] It is this strange literature that records the hopes of Judaism. It includes the forerunners and models of our New Testament Book of Revelation.

IV. The Rise and Development of Apocalyptic Literature

The writers of these strange and sometimes repulsive symbolical visions were the direct and legitimate descendants of the great Old Testament prophets. How it came about that they selected this peculiar type of literature we cannot say with certainty. We cannot suppose they report actual experiences. Their visions are too stereotyped for that. Many of them are highly wrought allegories. Something of the sort is to be found in Egyptian, Babylonian, and Persian literature; and there can be no doubt that some of the apocalyptists laid the mythologies of Babylon, Persia, and Greece under tribute for part of their material.[2] Much of it, again, probably came from popular traditions which were in circulation among the Jews.[3] On the other hand, the Hebrew prophets had already shown tendencies which may have determined the drift in this direction. All Hebrew writers use meta-

[1] See Dan. 7:8; Rev. 12; 13; I En. 83-90; the Test. XII Patr. and Ps. Sol. are honorable exceptions.

[2] Cp. J. A. McCulloch in *ERE* V 381, and A. C. Zenos, *DCG* I 80.

[3] Oesterley, *Apocrypha*, p. 200, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 41-44; Oesterley and Box, *Relig. and Worship of the Synagogue* (New York, 1907), pp. 34 f.

phorical language that would be impossible to a westerner.[1] Practically all the prophets record strange visions of a more or less symbolical nature. This is particularly true of Ezekiel, who is already under the influence of the tremendously imposing civilization of Babylon. His visions have a different character. They are artificially allegorical and complicated in detail as in none of his predecessors. Some of them read like the description of a nightmare he might have had after spending a day looking at the griffins, sphinxes, winged wheels, and other characteristic features of Assyro-Babylonian art which recent excavations have discovered to us. In style as in thought Ezekiel stands at the beginning of the new type of prophecy. Yet for four centuries no writer records such visions as his. The language and the ideas of preprophetic eschatology as he had used them in his later years maintain themselves unabated. The form of the apocalypse seems to develop below the surface, to appear full blown in the second century.

The whole era of Jewish apocalyptic literature from Ezekiel to the final dispersion of the Jews from Jerusalem in 135 A. D. may be divided into four periods: (1) the preliminary period during which it developed its characteristic forms and ideas, down to the Maccabean revolt; (2) the Maccabean period, the time of Jewish independence, signalized by the appearance of the first real apocalypses; (3) the Pharisaic period, from the Roman conquest to the outbreak of the Jewish war, when Jewish leadership was anti-apocalyptic; and (4) the Zelotic period, from the Jewish war to Bar-Cochba, when the spirit of revolt against Rome was dominant.[2]

The history of the first period is extremely difficult to

[1] See the elaboration of this idea in the article by R. H. Kennet, "The Development of the Apocalyptic Style," *Interpreter*, VIII 4 (London, July, 1912), 386-401.

[2] See the divisions of Dewick, *Primitive Christian Eschatology* (New York, 1912), p. 57.

reconstruct, since for many generations historical sources are lacking. The literature of the time includes Ezekiel, Is. 13; 14; 40-66; Jer. 50; 51; Ob. 1-15 at least, Haggai, Zech. 1-8, Malachi, Joel, Is. 24-27; 34; 35, and Zech. 9-14. These prophecies present quite diverse points of view. As we have seen, Ezekiel stands midway between prophecy and apocalypticism. Whether Is. 40-66 is the work of one author writing sometime between Zerubbabel and Nehemiah[1] or of two or more writers living a hundred years apart,[2] the fact remains that from the standpoint of apocalyptic thinking the main difference is that Is. 40-55 is more hopeful, Is. 56-66 less so, and the whole has a very different spirit from Ezekiel and the literature that follows his example. In spite of untoward outward conditions the spirit of these chapters is one of high idealism and unshaken hopefulness. There is almost no threatening, but everywhere the certainty that the great era of glory is to be expected in the near future.

Isaiah 56-66 contains occasional references to the terrible punishment Yahweh will mete out to the nations or the individuals who have opposed him.[3] In Is. 13-14:17, in Obadiah, and in Joel (3:1-17), as in Ezekiel, the punishment of Israel's adversaries is described with a vindictiveness quite at variance with the spirit of Second Isaiah. On the other hand, Haggai, Zech. 1-8, Malachi, and Joel, all unite in threatening Israel for her sins. Because Yahweh's people have not fulfilled his requirements, the glorious visions of Second Isaiah have not become a reality. But the moral standpoint of these prophets, like Ezekiel in part, is on the whole distinctly priestly and not prophetic, for it is tithes and offerings,

[1] Driver, *Introduction* 9th ed., p. 230, Kent, *Makers and Teachers of Judaism* (New York, 1911), pp. 61 ff.

[2] Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia* ("Hand-Commentar zum AT"), 3rd ed., pp. xv., 260, 389.

[3] 59:15-21; 63:1-6; 66:14-17.

not mercy and justice, which they demand of the people.[1] Thus for a time apocalypticism becomes the handmaid of legalism.

Zechariah 1-8 and Haggai are the only prophets after Ezekiel who are exactly datable. At the time of their activities (520 B. C.) there seemed to be an immediate prospect that Israel might free herself from the Persian yoke, and they are convinced that Yahweh meant at this time to restore the Davidic line in the person of Zerubbabel. But Darius quickly restored order throughout the empire and their hopes were dashed to the ground. From that time on until the first century B. C. we have no allusion to the expectation of a Davidic messiah.[2]

At the close of this preliminary period stand three Old Testament passages which show the eschatological type of thought highly developed, Is. 34-35, Zech. 9-14, and Is. 24-27. Here we find no longer threats against Israel, but only promises of a glorious future. The destruction of the nations is predicted in the wildest terms of world-catastrophe. The reference to Leviathan in Is. 27 takes us back to the earliest Babylonian legends, that were probably part of common Semitic mythology. As at the beginning of creation, so at the beginning of the "new age," God is to destroy the powers of evil. But now the victory is to end not merely in the defeat, but in the complete annihilation of the dragon.[3] In form this literature is not the apocalypse; it is not made up of visions. In fact, as we have said, from Ezekiel and Zech. 1-8 to Daniel there is not a piece of literature of the vision type. But in spirit these little propheeies prepare for the sudden outburst of apocalypses in the time of the Maccabean wars.

[1] Zech. 5:1-4 and Mal. 3 combine prophetic and legalistic morality.

[2] It is probable, therefore, that if Is. 9:1-7; 11:1-10; Jer. 23:3-8; Mic. 5:2, 4 are not authentic, they belong to the period between Ez. (37:21-28) and Haggai.

[3] Cp. Ps. 74:13, 14, probably written about the same time. See Oesterley, *Messianic Idea*, pp. 53 f., 94 ff.

The apocalyptic works of the preliminary period, insofar as their authors are not known, were, no doubt, originally anonymous. The real apocalypses are pseudonymous. To this great central period belong Daniel, I Enoch, or Ethiopic Enoch, the earliest section of the Sibylline oracles (3:97-828), the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and Jubilees. Of these Daniel 7-12 and I Enoch are true apocalypses, the latter a sort of apocalyptic encyclopedia, for it is not the product of one mind, but of several, writing at different times during a century or more. The characteristic eschatological ideas and language constantly recur, and the message is conveyed usually in the form of visions, sometimes of a most bizarre and even disgusting sort. The Sibylline Oracles are an attempt by Hellenistic Jews to use the name of the famous heathen priestess to give currency to Jewish views. Though this pseudonym demands a different form and treatment, the ideas are essentially those of Palestinian apocalyptic literature. Jubilees and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs are not apocalypses throughout, but place is made for certain predictions which are thoroughly apocalyptic in tone, with this difference that the observance of the Law is expected to usher in a change in the condition of men so great that a messianic kingdom, temporary perhaps, but glorious in righteousness and material prosperity, will come upon the earth.

The third period of Jewish apocalyptic literature, from the Roman conquest of Palestine in 63 B. C. to the Jewish war in 66 A. D., probably saw the completion of Ethiopic Enoch in its present form. The one Palestinian apocalypse belonging wholly to this century and a quarter is the Assumption of Moses,[1] but the Psalms of Solomon, which are dominated by eschatological ideas, come from the beginning of this era, and towards its end short apocalypses which were later embodied in the Apocalypse of Baruch

[1] G. Hölscher, *ZNTW* XVII (1916) 108-127, 149-158 dates it 131 A. D.

and IV Ezra were written, while to its very close belongs the Markan apocalypse.[1] In Egypt the Slavonic (II) Enoch and parts of Sibylline Oracles I and II were written. In literature this period is marked by a refinement of apocalyptic imagery and a spiritualization of the apocalyptic ideal. In politics it was distinguished by just the opposite tendency, the rise of Zelotism, which dominates the nation during the succeeding period.

After the fall of Jerusalem, during the fourth, or Zelotic, period, three great apocalypses were compiled: the Syriac (II) Baruch and IV Ezra among the Jews, and the Revelation for the Christians. Those portions of these two composite Jewish works which were written after the fall of the city show a marked tendency toward an antipolitical, spiritual conception of the end in striking contrast to the prevailing attitude of Jewish society in this period. In Egypt the Jewish original of the Greek apocalypse of Baruch and the fourth and fifth books of the Sibylline Oracles were written.

Later a considerable Christian apocalyptic literature, in part depending upon Jewish works, in part original or influenced by Greek conceptions of the hereafter, arose. Likewise the Jews did not entirely abandon this type of literature. The above, however, are the most important of the works of this type and the ones that most nearly concern us in attempting to trace the origin of Christian eschatology and apocalypticism.

Apocalyptic literature was the natural product of its times. Given a nation that was essentially "supernaturalistic" in its world view, that was deeply ethical and sensitively conscientious, and harbored no doubts as to the final victory of righteousness, given such a nation suffering century after century from its more powerful neighbors and its own unscrupulous aristocracy, and such a hope was an inevitable outcome. How could the Jew know the

[1] Mark 13; see below, pp. 155 f., 177 ff.

future, of which he was so certain, except by means of visions? How could his vision of that future be given form except in the imaginative materials provided by mythology and allegory? In such a literature the idealistic patriot could vent his execration of his foes and warm his faith and hope with brilliant visions of a better time to come. Repressed by a mechanical view of inspiration and canonicity and a pedantic conception of God's manner of revealing himself, the prophetic spirit found its expression in the varied and exaggerated fashion of these works. Thus we may describe the origin of apocalyptic literature. Thus arose the apocalyptic attitude toward life, the apocalyptic movement, if anything so indefinite and unorganized may be called a movement. The meaning and value of it we shall consider in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

A COUNSEL OF DESPAIR

I. The Chief Ideas of Apocalypticism

IN our sketch of the history of apocalypticism we have seen that it was the child of disorder.[1] When the world was in commotion, when disasters, political, social, and cosmic, seemed to impend, then the imaginations of wide circles of people were stirred to the expectation of imminent change, and the apocalyptist arose to interpret these hopes and stimulate them to new vividness and endurance.[2] He could not sail to the isles of the blest on a quiet sea, he must ride upon the storm. He sees hope ahead only when evil increases and destruction is upon him. He is no believer in the calm processes of social evolution and peaceful reform. Only the red hand of revolution can heal the woes of the world. It does not matter whether the hand is to be God's or man's; his reasoning is the same. His is the temper of the social revolutionary of today; out of chaos, by some providence, a better order will come. His is a counsel of despair, and this spirit will be seen in all the chief apocalyptic ideas, to which we now turn our attention.

The despair of apocalypticism appears most distinctly in its picture of the evils of the present age and of the woes which are expected immediately to precede the end. "In the last days" there are to be almost universal sin and apostacy with physical portents and calamities of the

[1] See above, pp. 96 f.

[2] See above, pp. 4 f., quotation from Dewey.

most terrifying kind. One might quote such predictions endlessly from Jewish writers of the centuries just before or just after the birth of Jesus. It is to be remembered that in every case the descriptions are written as if they were ancient prophecies, when in reality they are contemporary accounts. Enoch, or the twelve sons of Jacob, or Moses, or Baruch, or Ezra, or Daniel is represented as looking down through the centuries and prophesying that all these evils will come to pass "in the last days," just before the day of judgment. Allusions to recent well known historical events are frequent. The reader of that age would say at once, "These are the happenings of our time; these are the sins and evils of this generation." And he would, therefore, believe what the actual writer believed and wished to proclaim, that sin had reached its limit, the end was at hand, the last woes were upon the world. This is the essence of apocalypticism, that it sees the end immediately impending, because the world seems incurably evil.

In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs there is put into the mouth of Judah a description of conditions in the first century B. C. which are thought to presage the end, with evident allusion to the Maccabean and Herodian dynasties. It reads,

> "For the kings shall be as sea-monsters;
> They shall swallow men like fishes;
> The sons and daughters of freemen shall they enslave;
> Houses, lands, flocks, money shall they plunder.
> . . . . . .
> And there shall be false prophets like tempests,
> And they shall persecute all righteous men.
> And the Lord shall bring upon them divisions one against another.
> And there shall be continual wars in Israel;
> And among men of another race shall my kingdom be brought to an end,
> Until the salvation of Israel shall come.
> . . . . . .

Now I have much grief, my children, because of your lewdness and witchcrafts, and idolatries which ye shall practise against the kingdom, following them that have familiar spirits, diviners, and demons of error. . . . For which things' sake the Lord shall bring upon you famine and pestilence, death and the sword, beleaguering by enemies, and revilings of friends, the slaughter of children, the rape of wives, the plundering of possessions, . . . the laying waste of the land, the enslavement of yourselves among the Gentiles. . . . And after these things shall a star arise to you from Jacob in peace."[1]

Levi tells the sons gathered around his death-bed,

"The sons of men . . . sin and provoke the Most High.
Now, therefore, know that the Lord shall execute judgment upon the sons of men.
Because when the rocks are being rent,
And the sun quenched,
And the waters dried up,
And the fire cowering,
And all creation troubled,
And the invisible spirits melting away,
And Hades taketh spoils through the visitations of the Most High,
Men will be unbelieving and persist in their iniquity.
On this account with punishment shall they be judged."[2]

The angel Jeremiah tells Ezra:

"Concerning the signs, however:

Behold, the days come when the inhabitants of earth shall be seized with great panic,
And the way of truth shall be hidden,
and the land be barren of faith.

[1] Test. Jud. 21:17-24:1.
[2] Test. Levi 3:10-4:21.

And iniquity shall be increased. . . .
Then shall the sun suddenly shine forth by night
and the moon by day:
And blood shall trickle forth from wood,
and the stone utter its voice:
The peoples shall be in commotion,
the outgoings of the stars shall change.
. . . . . .
. . . And the birds shall take to general flight,
and the sea shall cast forth its fish.
. . . . . .
And the earth o'er wide regions shall open,
and fire burst forth for a long period:
The wild beasts shall desert their haunts, and women
bear monsters. . . .
And unrighteousness and incontinency shall be multiplied upon the earth. . . .
And it shall be
In that time men shall hope and not obtain,
shall labor and not prosper. . . ."[1]

Two important notations the attentive reader of the above quotations will make: In the first place, it is quite apparent that the apocalyptic writer passes very easily from actual description of the present to imaginative and sometimes grotesque pictures of what may be expected in the immediate future. In the second place, one familiar with the New Testament will remark the striking likeness between much of this language and that of such passages as Mark 13 and Rev. 16, and will be prepared for the obvious conclusion that many early Christians adopted the pessimism of the apocalyptic world view and even the phrases in which it was expressed.

The great day of Yahweh, or day of Judgment, as it came to be called in this period, was to make an end of this age and introduce the coming one. To the Jews

[1] IV Ezra 5:1-2, 4-8, 11-12; cp. I En. 91:5-7; 100:1-3; Jub. 23:9-25; II Bar. 24:1-29:1; 32:4-6, etc.

who lived between 200 B. C. and 100 A. D., the situation was in all essential particulars the same as it had been for Nahum, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah. Judgment was still in the future or was just culminating. Sin was still unpunished; the new age of righteousness and happiness was still to appear. There was, however, this important difference, that they had ancient and apparently very definite prophecies whose predictions were unfulfilled. This, with the influx of Babylonian and Persian mythology, caused that distinct retrogression we have noted to those popular notions which the prophets had attempted to reinterpret or supplant.[1] This is especially true with regard to the purpose of the judgment that is to come and its relation to nature and history.

The very change of name from day of Yahweh to day of Judgment indicates a new conception of this "great day." For the apocalyptist it was not so much a time of God's self-manifestation as a time of the revelation and punishment of wickedness. The old popular idea of a vindication of Israel and a punishment or destruction of all her foes comes again to the front in Ezekiel and all his spiritual successors.[2] To be sure, the individualism of Ezekiel is not forgotten. The wicked Jew is to suffer along with the Gentiles. The apocalyptist belongs to a special group of "the righteous." But along with sectarian particularism went a national particularism which tended to bring all Jews within the sphere of God's mercy and to exclude all Gentiles. IV Ezra says,

> "Thou hast said that for our sakes Thou hast created this world. But as for the other nations, which are descended from Adam, Thou hast said that they are nothing, and that they are like unto spittle; and Thou hast likened the abundance of them to a drop on a bucket. . . . If the world has indeed been created for

[1] See above, pp. 66 f., 80 f., 99 ff.

[2] Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 101, 105 f., 115 ff.

our sakes, why do we not enter into possession of our world?"[1]

This was the orthodox view of Pharisaism. But many of the apocalyptists, who were far from orthodox, were true universalists, following the lofty ideals of Jeremiah and of Is. 19:24 f.[2] Judgment was to come upon all the world, and all the world was to become righteous as a result of its purifying fires. "The Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the earth, and enlightened through the grace of the Lord," says the Testament of Levi.[3] In other passages a sort of compromise is attempted such as Second Isaiah had suggested. Israel, the servant of Yahweh, is to be the light of the Gentiles.

"From your root shall arise a stem;
And from it shall grow a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles,
To judge and to save all that call upon the Lord."[4]

There is a certain very unlovely vindictiveness about the predictions of judgment upon the wicked. According to the Similitudes of Enoch (I En. 37-71), the rulers of the earth shall petition the Son of man for mercy, but God will drive them away.

"And he will deliver them to the angels for punishment,
To execute vengeance on them because they have oppressed His children and His elect;
And they shall be a spectacle for the righteous and for His elect:
They shall rejoice over them,
Because the wrath of the Lord of Spirits resteth upon them,
And His sword is drunk with their blood."[5]

[1] 6:55-57, 59; cp. 7:11; Ass. Mos. 1:12; II Bar. 14:19.
[2] Oesterley, *Apocrypha*, pp. 103 f.; Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 101 f., 107 ff.
[3] 18:9.
[4] Test. Jud. 24:5 f., first century B. C. according to Charles.
[5] I En. 62:11 f. Cp. chap. 63 and Ass. Mos. 10:10.

On the other hand, the apocalyptists are forerunners of Jesus and Paul in their proclamation of salvation to all who repent. They stand as the connecting link between the lofty spiritual ideals of ancient Hebrew prophetism and Christian evangelism.

We have seen that according to the ancient popular theology Yahweh was expected to manifest himself on his great day by various terrifying and destructive natural phenomena, or even by cosmic convulsions more disastrous than the Flood of ancient legend. The prophets in part adopted the popular language and ideas, in part reinterpreted them, or combined with them the idea of a divine interposition in history. Thus they at least suggested less a mechanical intervention from without than a divine, providential working through society. The Jewish apocalyptists for the most part know only a thoroughly mechanical, supernaturalistic interposition from without. The two principal exceptions are the legalistic, half-apocalyptic book of Jubilees, which portrays the coming of the new age by a gradual development as the result of the study of the Law,[1] and the Maccabean, half-apocalyptic Testament of Levi, where the Levitic messiah inaugurates a reign of righteousness.[2] But for most of the apocalyptists of the second and first centuries B. C., the day of Judgment means a supernatural interference with the course of nature and history, by which the kings and mighty are put down, and the righteous poor exalted.

It means also a cosmic catastrophe that involves the whole universe. In the Assumption of Moses we read:

> "For the Heavenly One will arise from His royal throne,
> And He will go forth from His holy habitation
> With indignation and wrath on account of His sons.
> And the earth shall tremble; to its confines shall it be shaken:

[1] 23:26-29.

[2] 18:1-14.

And the high mountains shall be made low
And the hills shall be shaken and fall.
And the horns of the sun shall be broken and he shall be turned into darkness;
And the moon shall not give her light, and be turned wholly into blood.
And the circle of the stars shall be disturbed.
And the sea shall retire into the abyss,
And the fountains of waters shall fail,
And the rivers shall dry up.
For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone.
And He will appear to punish the Gentiles,
And He will destroy all their idols."[1]

As with the prophets, so with the apocalyptists, it is difficult to say how far such language is to be taken literally. Gradually, however, the conviction grew upon Jewish thinkers that this earth is wholly evil and must be destroyed before God can reign in righteousness. Such was probably the view of the writer just quoted. Such was certainly the opinion of the author of the fourth book of the Sibylline Oracles, who says,

"Fire shall come upon the whole world, and a mighty sign,
With sword and trumpet at the rising of the sun.
The whole world shall hear a rumbling and a mighty roar.
And He shall burn the whole earth, and consume the whole race of men,
And all the cities, and rivers, and the sea.
He shall burn everything out, and there shall be a sooty dust."[2]

The passivistic, supernaturalistic type of belief is presented most clearly and beautifully in the so-called Salathiel-apocalypse of IV Ezra. Its thought can best be appreciated as embodying, on the one hand, the lessons learned in the Jewish war and the destruction of the city,

[1] 10:3-7; cp. I En. 1:3-7.
[2] 4:173-178, dated about 80 A. D., Lanchester.

and, on the other hand, a polemic against messianism, particularly, perhaps, that of the Christians.[1] The seer relates,

> "Then said I: O Lord, I beseech thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, show Thy servant by whom Thou wilt visit Thy creation.
>
> And he said unto me: In the beginning of the terrestrial world
> before ever the Heavenward portals were standing,
> or ever the wind-blasts blew;
> before the rumblings of thunderings did sound,
> or ever the lightning-flashes did shine;
>
> When the foundations of paradise were not yet laid,
> nor the beauty of its flowers yet seen;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Before ever the heights of the air were uplifted,
> ere the spaces of the firmament were named,
> ere the foot-stool of Sion was appointed,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Even then had I these things in mind; and through me alone and none other were they created; as also the End shall come through me alone and none other."[2]

Less polemical but equally spiritual and imaginative is the description of the day of Judgment:

> "For thus shall the Day of Judgment be:
> A day whereon is neither sun, nor moon, nor stars;
> neither clouds, nor thunder, nor lightning;
> neither wind, nor rain-storm, nor cloud-rack;
> neither darkness, nor evening, nor morning;
> neither summer, nor autumn, nor winter;
> neither heat, nor frost, nor cold;
> neither hail, nor rain, nor dew;
> neither noon, nor night, nor dawn;
> neither shining, nor brightness, nor light,
>
> save only the splendor of the brightness of the Most

[1] Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II 574.
[2] 5:56; 6:1-4, 6.

High, whereby all shall be destined to see what has been determined for them."[1]

One characteristic development of the idea of judgment makes it include the overthrow of all the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Owing to the influence of Babylonia and Persia, there began in the time of the Exile a startling recrudescence of primitive animism in the development of angelology and demonology.[2] Judaism almost accepted the dualism of Zoroastrianism. Accordingly, a cardinal feature of apocalypticism was the belief—already present in germ in the ancient mythology —that, in the Lord's great day of Judgment, he would overthrow all the fallen angels and the hostile evil spirits who had opposed his will. The legend of war in heaven between the devil with his angels and the hosts of God is not infrequently referred to in the apocalypses.[3] It is foreshadowed or implied in the references in Daniel to the struggles of Gabriel and Michael with the (demonic) princes of Persia and Greece.[4] It developed into the complicated and variously interpreted conception of Antichrist, the demonic counterpart of the messiah and leader of the hosts of wickedness in the heavenly regions, who was to become incarnate just before the end.[5]

The judgment and punishment of hostile heavenly hosts is the first act of the apocalyptic drama of the last day.

[1] 7:39-42.

[2] See above, pp. 100 f.

[3] Sib. Or. 3:796-807; II Mac. 5:2-4; Josephus, *War* vi 5, 3. Rev. 12: 7 introduced it to Christian thought. Cp. Test. Dan 6:1-5; II Bar. 27:9; Charles, *Studies in the Apocalypse* (Edinburgh, 1913), p. 129.

[4] Dan. 10:13, 20, 21; 12:1; cp. Dt. 32:8 in the LXX; see Driver, "Int. Crit. Com.," *Deuteronomy*, ad loc., and H. P. Smith, *Religion of Israel*, p. 305.

[5] See Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend* (London, 1896), especially chap. x, where it is shown that the legend arose out of the old myth of the primeval dragon, conquered, but not destroyed by God, who "in the last days" would rise again in revolt before being finally annihilated.

The myths that are at the bottom of this belief are frequently referred to in the latter part of the Old Testament.[1] Later Jewish and Christian apocalypses develop the idea. In I En. 90, after the Lord has taken his seat upon the throne of judgment, he first of all summons before him the fallen and faithless angels, "and they were judged and found guilty, and went to the place of condemnation, and they were cast into an abyss, full of fire and flaming, and full of pillars of fire."[2] "Then Satan shall be no more, and sorrow shall depart with him," says the Assumption of Moses.[3] The Book of Revelation made this idea also at home in Christian doctrine.

The second act in the drama of judgment was the overthrow and punishment of "the kings and the mighty and the exalted, and those who hold the earth," to quote the Similitudes of Enoch.[4] These are probably the Sadducees and the Jewish native rulers, who in a later section of the book, are designated as "blinded sheep,"[5] for the later Maccabeans and all the Sadducees had been opponents and persecutors of the pious observers of the Law. Their punishment is thus described:

> "And this Son of Man whom thou hast seen,
> Shall put down the kings and the mighty from their seats,
> And shall loosen the reins of the strong,
> And break the teeth of sinners.
> . . . . . .
> Then shall pain come on them as on a woman in travail,
> . . . . . .
> And one portion of them shall look on the other,
> And they shall be terrified,

[1] Is. 24:21-23; 27:1; 34:4 f.; Job 3:8; 41:1; Ps. 74:13 f.; Is. 51:9; etc., cp. above, pp. 48 ff.
[2] V. 24; cp. 100:4; 10:4-16.
[3] 10:1.
[4] I En. 62:3; cp. 38:4, 5; 46:4-8; 48:8-10; 53:1-7; 62:1-12; 63.
[5] 90:26.

And they shall be downcast of countenance,
And pain shall seize them,
When they see that Son of Man
Sitting on the throne of his glory."[1]

Although they will humbly repent and "supplicate for mercy at his hands,"

"Their faces shall be filled with darkness
And shame before that Son of Man,
And they shall be driven from his presence,
And the sword shall abide before his face in their midst."[2]

Class consciousness, born of ethical and religious as well as social differences, speaks here, as it does in many passages in the gospels.[3] Jesus and his followers inherited this attitude, but they include, not merely the Sadducees, but the Pharisees and non-Jewish rulers among the mighty who are to be overthrown.

The day of Judgment will be a time of revelation of secret sins and of separation between the righteous and the wicked.[4] The Son of Man "revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden."[5]

"For he is mighty in all the secrets of righteousness,
And unrighteousness shall disappear as a shadow,
And have no continuance;
. . . . . .
And he shall judge the secret things,
And none shall be able to utter a lying word before him."[6]

"He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall;
And he shall be the light of the Gentiles,
And the hope of those who are troubled of heart."[7]

[1] I En. 46:4; 62:4 f.
[2] I En. 62:6-12; 63:10 f.
[3] Lk. 1:51 ff.; 6:20-26; cp. above, pp. 88 ff.
[4] I En. 51:2.
[5] I En. 46:3.
[6] I En. 49:2, 4.
[7] I En. 48:4.

"And the earth shall be wholly rent in sunder,
And all that is upon the earth shall perish,
And there shall be a judgment upon all men.
But with the righteous He will make peace,
And will protect the elect,
And mercy shall be upon them.
And they shall all belong to God,
And they shall be prospered,
And they shall all be blessed.
. . . . . .
And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones,
To execute judgment upon all,
And to destroy all the ungodly;
And to convict all flesh
Of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed,
And of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."[1]

Thus the day of Judgment becomes essentially a time of triumph for the pious and a vindication of his faith and practice. If one looks away from the occasional narrow nationalism and religious snobbery of these writers, one cannot but be impressed with their tremendous moral earnestness. In spite of all its defects apocalypticism rendered a great service in the emphasis it laid on righteous living.

The relation of the divine kingdom to the day of judgment was variously conceived. The view that the new age of righteousness and joy would develop naturally out of the old tended of necessity to modify or obscure the thought of the great day of judgment.[2] The prevailing view of the second century before Christ was that the judgment preceded the Golden Age, which was to endure eternally upon the earth.[3] But, with the disappointment

[1] I En. 1:7-9; cp. Jude 14 f., a direct quotation.
[2] So in Jubilees and the Test. of Levi; see above, pp. 107, 115 f.
[3] Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 199.

of their hopes, which the pious suffered during that century, and the spread of the non-Jewish idea that matter was essentially evil, the conviction grew that no rule of righteousness could be permanent upon this earth, and so the final judgment was adjourned to the close of a temporary messianic kingdom.[1] There might be preliminary judgments, as in the Flood, or by the sword of the Maccabees,[2] and there must be one at the beginning of the new age, but accounts would not be finally closed until the present heaven and earth should pass away.[3] The keenness of the feeling that matter was evil determined whether the apocalyptist believed that the judgment preceding the messianic kingdom involved a complete transformation of the earth. In some books the hope even of a temporary messianic kingdom is abandoned.[4] In others, again, its exact duration is predicted; according to one part of IV Ezra, 400 years, according to II Enoch, 1,000 years.[5]

We find, then, three chief theories as to the character of the new age:

(1) It is to be of eternal duration on this present earth (I En. 1-36, II Mac.);

(2) It is to be of temporary duration on the earth (Ps. Sol., Sib. Or., Jub., Ass. Mos., II En., II Bar., IV Ez.);

(3) It is to be of eternal duration in a new heaven and a new earth (I En. 37-70; cp. Is. 65:17; 66:22; Zech. 14:6 f.; Is. 60:19 f.). The new heaven and earth were to be "eternal blessing and light."[6]

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 200-203, 233 f.

[2] Dan. 2:44; I En. 91:12; 95:7; 98:12.

[3] Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 233 f.

[4] II Bar, 49-52; IV Ezra, IV Mac.; see Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[5] II En. 32:2-33:2; IV Ez. 7:28 f. See Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 243, and *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II 451, note.

[6] I En. 45:4 f.

"And the righteous and elect shall be saved in that day,
. . . . . .
And the Lord of Spirits will abide over them,
And with that Son of Man shall they eat
And lie down and rise up for ever and ever."[1]

This was, no doubt, all spiritually conceived. On the other hand, those pictures of Edenic ease and plenty which the prophets had painted[2] were understood literally and repeated with additional details by the apocalyptic writers. In the earlier section of I Enoch we read,

"And then shall the righteous escape,
And shall live till they beget thousands of children.
. . . . . .
And then shall the whole earth be tilled in righteousness, and shall be planted with trees and be full of blessing. And all desirable trees shall be planted on it, and they shall plant vines on it: and the vine which they plant thereon shall yield wine in abundance, and as for all the seed which is sown thereon, each measure (of it) shall bear a thousand, and each measure of olives shall yield ten presses of oil."[3]

We may well suppose that this conception of the new age was preferred by the rank and file of the nation.

Four different views regarding the messiah appear in Jewish literature:

(1) In a large number of apocalyptic works, as in several Old Testament books, he does not appear at all,[4] or else plays a very unimportant role.[5]

[1] I En. 62:13, f.

[2] Am. 9:13 f.; Hos. 2:22 f.; Jer. 31:5; Ez. 28:26; 34:26 f.; Is. 41:18 ff.; 51:3; 25:6; 55:13; Joel 3:18; etc., cp. above, pp. 55 ff.

[3] 10:17 ff.; see Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 207-221; Volz, *Jüdische Eschatalogie*, pp. 350 f.; see Charles, *Apoc. and Pseudep.* II, note to I En. 25:4 and to II Bar. 29:5.

[4] Nah., Hab., Zeph., I En. 1-36; 9-104; I and II Mac., Judith, Ass. Mos., Wis., II En., IV Mac. See Charles, *Eschatology, Index*, s. v. "Messiah".

[5] Ez. 37:24 f.; 45:7 ff., 17; 46:16 ff., etc.; I En. 90:37; Sib. Or. 3:652-6.

(2) In the original Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, written during the height of the Maccabean successes and before the breach of the dynasty with the Pharisees, the messiah is to come from the tribe of Levi, since the Maccabeans belonged to that priestly tribe.[1]

(3) With the disappointment of this hope, later interpolations were made in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs claiming the messiah again for Judah,[2] a view that became dominant from the first century on. The popular view, no doubt, made this Davidic messiah a thoroughly temporal conqueror. But a spiritually militant anointed one of the lineage of David is described in the Psalms of Solomon:

> "Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the son of David,
> At the time in which Thou seest, O God, that he may reign over Israel Thy servant.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Wisely, righteously, he shall thrust out sinners from the inheritance,
> He shall destroy the pride of the sinner as a potter's vessel.
> With a rod of iron he shall break in pieces all their substance,
> He shall destroy the godless nations with the word of his mouth.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And he shall have the heathen nations to serve him under his yoke;
> And he shall glorify the Lord in a place to be seen of all the earth;
> And he shall purge Jerusalem, making it holy as of old;
> So that nations shall come from the ends of the earth to see his glory,

[1] Test. Reub. 6:7-12; Test. Levi. 8:14; 18; Test. Jud. 24:1-3; etc.; see Charles, *Test. of the Twelve Patr.* (London, 1908), p. xcvii.

[2] Test. Jud. 24:5 f.

Bringing as gifts her sons who had fainted,
And to see the glory of the Lord, wherewith God hath glorified her.
And he shall be a righteous king, taught of God, over them,
And there shall be no unrighteousness in his days in their midst,
For all shall be holy and their king the anointed of the Lord.[1]
For he shall not put his trust in horse and rider and bow,
Nor shall he multiply for himself gold and silver for war,
Nor shall he gather confidence from a multitude for the day of battle.
The Lord Himself is his king, the hope of him that is mighty through his hope in God."[2]

This, and more like it, justify the statement of Ryle and James:

> "In this representation of the human Messiah, perfect in holiness and taught of God, free from sin and wielding only the weapons of spiritual power, we find ourselves brought more nearly than in any other extant pre-Christian writing to the idealization of 'the Christ' who was born into the world not half a century later than the time at which these Psalms were written."[3]

(4) In place of this greater Son of David, human, but divinely ideal and sinless, the Similitudes of Enoch put a pre-existent, heavenly Son of Man. The title is borrowed directly from Daniel, but what is there only a personification or an angelic representative of the people of Israel[4] is here a distinct personality. He is thus described:

[1] In the Greek: Christ, the Lord.

[2] 17:23, 26, 27, 32-38.

[3] *Psalms of the Pharisees* (Cambridge, 1891), p. lvii.

[4] Dan. 7:9-27; cp. v. 14 with v. 27.

"And there I saw One who had a head of days,
And His head was white like wool,
And with Him was another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man,
And his face was full of graciousness, like one of the holy angels.

And I asked the angel who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was, and why he went with the Head of Days. And he answered and said unto me:

This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness,
With whom dwelleth righteousness,
And who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden,
Because the Lord of Spirits hath chosen him,
And whose lot hath pre-eminence before the Lord of Spirits in uprighteousness forever."[1]

"Yea, before the sun and the signs were created,
Before the stars of the Heaven were made,
His name was named before the Lord of Spirits.
He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall,
And he shall be the light of the Gentiles,
And the hope of those who are troubled of heart.
All who dwell on earth shall fall down and worship before him,
And will praise and bless and celebrate with song the Lord of Spirits.
And for this reason hath he been chosen and hidden before Him,
Before the creation of the world and for evermore."[2]

"And he sat on the throne of his glory,
And the sum of judgment was given unto the Son of Man,
And he caused sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth,
And those who have led the world astray."[3]

[1] I En. 46:1-3.
[2] I En. 48:3-6.
[3] I En. 69:27.

This unique conception of the messiah as the Son of Man, interpreting the Danielic personification or angelic representative of Israel as a real personality, second only to God in glory and power, is one of the most interesting developments in all pre-Christian apocalyptic literature, because of the use Jesus made of it and of its contribution of the idea of pre-existence to the Christian conception of the person of Christ. Synchronous with the early Christian preaching are the portrayals in II Bar. 53-74 and IV Ez. 13:1-53 of a less distinctly personal messiah who is likewise a superhuman, heavenly being appearing on the clouds.

Jewish apocalypticism developed one of the most important of religious doctrines, the belief in the resurrection of the individual. While we have undertaken to study the development of apocalyptic thinking from the standpoint of society rather than the individual, we cannot omit this subject, just because it marks so distinct a change from the purely social morality of pre-exilic times, and also because it offered a synthesis of individual and social eschatology.

From our documents it appears that, before the Exile and for many centuries after it, the Israelite, like the Babylonian and the Greek, thought of the condition of the dead as at best not a real spiritual life but only a shadowy existence without warmth or vitality. Indeed it would seem to have been the common belief that Sheol, the abode of the dead, swallowed up the soul completely. It was the land of forgetfulness (Ps. 88:12), of silence (Ps. 94:17), of destruction (Job 26:6; 28:22). The Hebrew besought God to keep him alive that he might worship:

> "Return, O Yahweh, deliver my soul;
> Save me for thy loving kindness' sake.
> For in death there is no remembrance of thee:
> In Sheol who shall give thee thanks?"[1]

[1] Ps. 6:4, 5; cp. 30:9; 88:10 ff.; 115:17; Is. 38:18.

The practical but skeptical "Preacher" advised:

> "Enjoy life with the wife whom thou lovest. . . . Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, whither thou goest."[1]

With the rise of the conception of individual morality, the idea that this world was the end of life came to be challenged. God was just, but the righteous did not always get their deserts in this life. Just as the misfortunes of the nation made necessary a revision of the early conception of Yahweh's relation to the nation, so the sufferings of the righteous made necessary a revision of the popular conception of the fate of the individual, if men were to believe in the righteousness of God. Job is one of the documentary remains of the struggle between conflicting views. It appears in Ecclesiastes.[2] The only clear enunciation of a belief in immortality in the Old Testament outside of Job is found in Ps. 49 and 73. Eventually the future of the nation and the individual threatened to become separate, if not antagonistic ideas, as they have with us.

But alongside the doctrine of individual moral responsibility and the consequent faith that a righteous God must in some way reward the righteous and punish the wicked in a future existence, Jewish patriotism maintained unimpaired the idea of a future period of superlative power and prosperity for God's people, Israel. The synthesis of these two ideas was found in the doctrine of the bodily resurrection, which made it possible for the righteous Israelite to come back to earth to enjoy the delights of the messianic kingdom, while the wicked languished in Sheol, now become a place of punishment and frequently called Gehenna. It was the dominance in Judaism of the

[1] Eccl. 9:9 f.

[2] 2:14; 7:15; 9:2.

materialistic conception of the reign of God on earth which made the adoption of the belief in the bodily resurrection natural, and encumbered Christianity with this unreasonable conception of the future life. Later, probably before the time of Jesus, the two ideas began to drop apart again. The hope of a future restoration of the nation could not be abandoned; but the idea of resurrection tended to pass into that of a personal spiritual immortality in a heavenly existence.

II. The Basic Principles of Apocalypticism: Its Philosophy of History

When we turn from the study of the chief ideas of apocalypticism to consider the principles upon which they are based, we discover that we have before us a real achievement, possibly the earliest philosophy of history. It goes out beyond the borders of the nation and takes in the whole world in a more or less orderly system. In outline it runs thus: Under the domination of the powers of evil, the world will go on growing worse and worse until God can endure it no longer; then he will intervene in the great day of Yahweh, or day of judgment, when all the wicked will be overthrown and the powers of evil destroyed or bound. Thus the way is cleared for the new age of indescribable peace and prosperity which the righteous will enjoy. The basic principles of the philosophy of history that lies back of this expectation are pessimism, determinism, externalism, and literalism, strangely mingled with universalism and moral idealism.

Apocalypticism is absolutely pessimistic as to the present earthly régime. As we have said, running through all this literature is a deep note of despair; the history of Judaism may be summed up in the three words, suffering,

hope, despair. The apocalypses always come from a time when the faithful are suffering to the uttermost. Their purpose is to console the pious with the hope of the glorious future which is soon to break upon them, when they have reached the last limit of endurance. Apocalypticism is, therefore, a counsel of despair. It is a naïve, popular philosophy, which says that the darkest hour is just before dawn, the philosophy of disappointed and defeated old age, which insists that the world is hopelessly bad and growing worse. It is a heathen philosophy, which insists that the only way to redeem the world is to destroy it.

The Hindu conception of Kali Yuga is an almost exact duplicate of it. A few years ago a Hindu periodical published an article by a student who, with the cocksure consistency of youth, argued that, since the gods would not destroy the earth and start the cycle again with the Golden Age until this age had reached the utmost limits of wickedness, it must be right in this age to do wrong. The most terrible monster of wickedness was hastening the coming of the Golden Age, the righteous man was delaying it. An entirely logical deduction from the given premises!

The pessimism of Jewish apocalyptists was taken from the prophets, but was tenfold augmented by the centuries of disappointed hopes through which the nation had gone. Its foundation is to be sought in the stern morality of both prophet and apocalyptist, and it speaks well for their moral earnestness. Its basic error is its skepticism; it fails to take account of God's power to regenerate man and society.

The second basic principle of apocalypticism is its determinism. The Jew believed that the whole history of the world, past and future, had been definitely ordered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Says IV Ezra, a younger contemporary of Paul,

"The Most High has made not one Age but two. . . . The present age has an end (*or,* is not the end: L); the glory of God abides not therein continuously. . . . But the Day of Judgment shall be the end of this age and the beginning of the eternal age that is to come; wherein

corruption is passed away,
weakness is abolished,
infidelity is cut off;
while righteousness is grown
and faithfulness is sprung up."[1]

All existence has been divided into the two ages, this age and the future age. The course of this age, again, has been prearranged according to a set scheme in which sacred numbers play a large part. Thus arose the calculations of the times and seasons which have been the bane of Premillennialism down to the present. Since God has prearranged all, there must necessarily be an orderly, symmetrical scheme of the ages, so the believer argued. With a few sacred numbers as a beginning, it was easy to reckon back into the past and determine just how long it would be until the great turning point in history might be expected.

The seventy years Jeremiah had predicted for the Captivity became the starting point for many curious computations.[2] The idea of four world empires, or eras, is common to Jewish, Persian, and Greek tradition.[3] According to II En. 33:1 f. the world is to last seven thousand years, after which eternity is to begin. This computation is definitely based on the seven days of creation, probably combined with the idea that a day is with the Lord as a thousand years.[4] The number "twelve"

[1] 7:50, 112-114.

[2] Dan. 9:24-27; I En. 89:59 ff.; 10:12; cp. Jer. 25:11; 29:10.

[3] Dan. 2:22; 7:3, 17; Rev. 6:1-8; I En. 89:59 ff.; IV Ez. 12; II Bar. 39.

[4] II Pt. 3:8; Ps. 90:4; Barn. 15.

figures in some of the apocalypses, probably borrowed from astrology.[1]

Such a conception of history is thoroughly mechanical and deterministic, and absolutely opposed to that sense of organic, genetic relationships in history and society which was beginning to dawn upon the prophets, and which is a part of the modern man's view of the world. It does credit to the Jew's confidence in God's governance of the universe, but it is in reality an unconscious prostitution of the idea of divine sovereignty and a fatalistic parody of faith in divine providence.

The apocalyptic point of view was mechanically external and unspiritual. It held that the only salvation for the world lay in interference from without. There are still those who insist on the sovereign will of God. He is thought to rule as a despot. Democracy has no place in his plan of the universe. This is exactly the view of apocalypticism. From the apocalyptic point of view there are no good forces in human nature and society which the divine Spirit can fructify and cause to grow. Goodness must be imposed in autocratic fashion from above. God is outside the world of nature and man, which is ruled by the Devil. Some day, when God's long-suffering has reached its limit, no matter what man desires, God will come down and establish his rule on earth. Democracy and apocalypticism, evolution and apocalypticism are contradictory terms.

The combination of determinism and externalism with an idea of revelation according to which God has already fully made known his will to the lawgivers and prophets of the past rendered a literalistic interpretation of the

[1] IV Ez. 4:36 ff.; 14:11; I En. 89:72. The fact that these numbers are found in the eschatology or mythology of Persia and Greece is an indication of the origin of this sort of speculation; the whole idea of predetermined periods of history is probably of astrological and, therefore, Babylonian origin. See Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 168-175; Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 160-168; Oesterley, *Apocrypha*, pp. 98 f.

sacred writings inevitable. All that has been foretold must take place word for word and letter for letter. Prophecies that seem not to have been fulfilled must be adjourned to the future. So, in a sense, Isaiah may have done with the oracle against Moab.[1] So Ezekiel did with the prophecy of a foe from the north which he reconstructed into the coming of Gog from the land of Magog; out of which in turn the New Testament apocalyptist manufactured his now famous Armageddon.[2] Thus Daniel and I Enoch try to reinterpret the seventy years of Jeremiah. Above all, the expectation of a literal fulfillment of the ancient prophecies of the coming of the messianic kingdom led to that long and heart-rending series of disappointments which we sketched in Jewish history.[3] It caused to blossom up in each period of supreme suffering the inextinguishable hope of a better time coming. Thus it assisted in keeping alive some of the highest ideals man has ever conceived. But, just because of its literalism, it combined with so much that was chauvinistic and impossible as to defeat itself. Worst of all, this feature, common to apocalypticism of both ancient and modern times, makes inspiration a mechanical dictation and the Bible a heathen oracle which must be twisted by force into some sort of accord with subsequent events. It is essentially superstitious and unspiritual and, therefore, unchristian.

Over against this unfavorable characterization of apocalypticism we must put certain features which in part redeem it and give it permanent value. This determinism and literalism are the product of an unswerving allegiance to God in the face of the most stupendous trial of faith. These men believed with all their hearts that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Just because they

[1] Is. 15; 16. Some so understand Is. 2:2-4; and Mic. 4:1-3.

[2] See above, p. 65 ff., and Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 174-192; Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 169.

[3] See above, pp. 89-96.

believed in the righteousness of God, they believed in the day of judgment. Their pessimism was the outcome of their high ethical standards. But over against their social pessimism we have to put a moral optimism, also the product of their faith in the righteousness of God. They could not believe the Judge of all the earth would leave

> "Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne."

The right must eventually triumph. And so in spite of their apparent pessimism they maintained through wars and captivities and persecutions innumerable, through successive disappointments that would have daunted weaker men, a faith in the ultimate reign of God over all the universe.

The moral and social idealism of the apocalyptists led many of them to break away from the narrow particularism of their contemporaries and to turn back toward the universalism of the prophets. Sad to say, this was not true of all. I En. 91:9 says,

> "And all the idols of the heathen shall be abandoned,
> And the temples burned with fire,
> And they shall remove them from the whole earth.
> And they (i. e. the heathen) shall be cast into the judgment of fire,
> And shall perish in wrath and in grievous judgment forever."

But in the Similitudes we read,

> "He will cause the others (i. e., the sinners) to witness (the judgment)
> That they may repent
> And forego the works of their hands.
> They shall have no honor through the name of the Lord of Spirits,
> Yet through His name shall they be saved,
> And the Lord of Spirits will have compassion on them,
> For His compassion is great."[1]

[1] I En. 50:2 f.

According to the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs the twelve tribes are to be gathered along with the Gentiles, to whom God will reveal his salvation. Indeed he will reprove Israel by chosen ones from among the Gentiles.[1] It was this universalism which paved the way for Paul and the Gentile mission of primitive Christianity.

III. The General Character of Apocalypticism

Prophecy was the mother of apocalypticism. In common with the prophet the apocalyptist had an unconquerable faith in God and an unswerving allegiance to the right. Their fundamental difference is that the apocalyptist is out of touch with life. Is it that his written and pseudonymous form of approaching the people prevents him from feeling their heart throbs? Or has he chosen that form because he was rather a theorist and a dreamer and an idealist than a stern, practical moralist and preacher of righteousness? Both, but the latter in particular, I believe. He could have broken through the prejudice against spoken prophecy as John the Baptist did, had he possessed the courage of John. It was his theory which led him to think the world hopelessly evil. It was his lack of touch with life that led him always to be looking for the day of the Lord in the future instead of acting in the living present. In many instances it led him to idealize his own people and to judge very harshly of the Gentiles. He was in danger either of fulminating against the immoralities of people who were far off, or foretelling how evil people were to be in the last days,[2] instead of directly reproving his own generation and calling it to repentance. In particular the frequent chauvinism and particularism

[1] Benj. 9:2; 10:5, 10.

[2] I do not overlook the fact that his descriptions of the last days are usually pictures of what the writer saw in his own times. It is the indirection of his method that weakens him.

of apocalypticism stand in marked contrast to the liberalism and fairmindedness of the prophets. Joel and Amos both quote what was probably a Jewish proverb, "Yahweh shall roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem."[1] Joel makes that word mean salvation for Israel, whereas Amos makes it mean her punishment. Amos sees things as they are, Joel as he wishes them to be. This serves to illustrate the fundamental difference between mother and child.

When, now, we come to summarize the development of eschatology during the six centuries following the Exile we discover great changes.

(1) The idea of cosmic catastrophe in popular and prophetic apocalyptic we have seen to be a survival from early cosmogonies combined with mythological conceptions of Yahweh as a nature god. Jewish apocalypticism inherited this idea, which had no essential place in prophetic eschatology, and under the influence of Babylonian and Persian cosmologies gave it a fundamental importance by uniting it with the Gnostic idea of the evil of matter. A good God could not rule an evil world. Therefore this earth must be purified and transformed by a cosmic miracle, or it must be destroyed. This conception appealed to the thoughtful, the philosophically inclined.

(2) We find the apocalyptist looking out upon the world with a wider and wider horizon. The earliest apocalyptists speak of a world catastrophe in the day of Yahweh, but that is mere scenery. The real drama has to do only with Israel and her immediate neighbors. As time goes on, it comes to include literally the whole universe.

(3) At the same time the individual comes to play a leading role. He is no longer merely one of the chorus. His personal salvation and his resurrection become matters of profound moment.

(4) Consequently there was a tendency to think of the

[1] Am. 1:2; Joel 3:16; cp. Jer. 25:30.

future in more transcendental terms, a tendency to make the national hope spiritual and otherworldly.

(5) Likewise there was a tendency to systematize the apocalyptic doctrines into dogmas. But as yet no single system or point of view had come to dominate the Jewish nation. There were, however, certain lines of cleavage due to emphasis. One type of apocalypticism tended to think of the coming change in terms of social and political reform, the other looked for a great cosmic upheaval. Between the two extremes were almost innumerable nuances of combination.[1]

(6) On the whole apocalypticism followed in the footsteps of Ezekiel, not only as to his prosaic imagination, his attitude toward earlier prophecy, and his particularism, but also as to his individualism. Not an Israel serving all the earth as in Second Isaiah, but one served by all the earth is the dominant hope.

(7) In spite of the general tendency toward legalism, apocalyptic literature generally maintained the ethical and religious emphasis of prophecy. It thus bridges the gap between prophetic Judaism and Christianity, keeping alive the ideals which Jesus made the center of his message.

One thing our brief survey must have made clear: apocalypticism presented to the Jew of Jesus' day anything but clear and consistent views. No apocalyptic system had as yet been worked out. Not only did individuals and parties differ greatly, but even the same writer used most inconsistent language. The most diverse and contradictory ideas were incorporated in the same work. Materials adopted from foreign mythologies and religions or inherited from older writers are often most ambiguously used, and must have been as confusing to their original readers as they are to us. Therefore we face a very complex problem when we try to determine which of the many

[1] Points 2-5 are suggested by Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, II ii 129-137.

shades of apocalypticism was adopted by Jesus and the other early Christian leaders and writers, just as they had a very difficult problem to determine what belief to adopt and how to express it clearly to their contemporaries. We shall expect to find that the early Christian hope is not simple and single, but multiform, like that from which it sprang.

CHAPTER VI

THE KINGDOM AT HAND

1. The Religious Situation in Jesus' Day

THE religious situation in Jesus' day was much more complicated than we have been accustomed to think. Fresh investigations are bringing to light new parties and new subdivisions within those already known. The Essenes could not have exercised any profound influence upon Judaism. They were ascetic and philosophical, given to magical practices and non-Jewish rites, and they had almost nothing to do with the origin of Christianity.[1]

The Sadducees were politicians and aristocrats, rejecting the prophets and the future hope together. The Pharisees, who made the study of the Scriptures their task and the keeping of the Law their delight, were a small group numerically, but extremely influential, since they had convinced the people that they alone fully represented true Judaism. The scribes, though not necessarily Pharisees, were usually of that party. There were two tendencies among these students of the Law, one more liberal, the other more conservative, each represented in pre-Christian times by a leading rabbi, Hillel and Shammai, for example. Josephus recognizes a fourth "sect," the Zelots, a growing body in Jesus' time, who under the form of messianic movements were promoting revolt against Rome. Recent discoveries have revealed a party of "Zadokites,"

[1] See Schürer, *Hist. Jew. People,* II ii 205-218, and Conybeare in *HDB* I 767-772. *Per contra* see F. Legge, *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity* (Cambridge, 1915), I 149-171.

a priestly group which accepted both prophetic and apocalyptic writings and looked for a messiah from "Aaron and Israel."[1] The Jerusalem Talmud says that at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem there were twenty-four kinds of heretics,[2] Jews who knew the Law but failed to keep it. Evidently Samaritans, Sadducees, Jewish Gnostics, and Jewish Christians were included in the list. Where did apocalypticism belong in relation to these parties?

The legalism of the scribes and Pharisees was the orthodoxy of Jesus' day. The Pharisee was the ideal Jew even to the multitude whom he despised because they knew not the Law nor tried to keep it. The Law was the word of God, complete revelation of man's duties. Its accurate preservation and interpretation by the scribe was a matter of supreme importance, for only so could man learn how he ought to serve God. God no longer spoke to man, but the scribe was the authoritative interpreter of the authoritative Scripture. The scribes and Pharisees believed in the coming of the kingdom of God—in God's own good time. It was a matter with which they had nothing to do, except that the keeping of the Law rendered one fit to have a part in it. Indeed, if the impossible should ever happen and Israel really keep the Law, the Kingdom would immediately come. Later rabbis said that if all Israel should keep one Sabbath perfectly, the end would come.[3] The scribe's interest was in the Law, not in the prophets, and, for the most part, it was only a dull and academic attention he gave to the coming of the new age.[4]

As we have already seen,[5] the apocalyptic movement was the chief social and religious heterodoxy of Jesus' day.

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[1] Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II 785-834.

[2] Sanh. x 5; *JE* VIII 594 f.

[3] Weber, *Jüdische Theologie* (Leipzig, 1897), p. 348 f.

[4] Charles, *Book of Jubilees* (London, 1902), pp. xiii, li; *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II 1, 407, 411; and especially, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (London, 1896), pp. 29 f., note on 15:5.

[5] See above, pp. 92 ff.

Not that it was then a "sect." It was rather a "tendency," like German pietism or modern Premillennialism, affecting all sects and resulting in the formation of new ones. The question is occasionally asked why, aside from Daniel, the so-called apocalypses never got into the canon and so were not handed down as Scripture. There were several reasons: most of them were written late and most of them contain matter which would make us far more trouble to explain than the story of Jonah and the whale. In the main a true sense of intrinsic values, for which we may be profoundly grateful, guided the Jewish people in their choice of the books they should regard as divinely inspired. But another factor entered into the choice: the editing and preserving of the Scriptures were in the hands of the scribes, and they, the legalists, the orthodox, were against the heterodox apocalyptists.[1]

It is sometimes remarked that practically every evangelist known in America today accepts quite vigorously the belief in the speedy coming of Christ in visible fashion to the earth to establish the millennial kingdom. That is perfectly natural. The ancient apocalyptists were the enthusiasts, the revivalists of their day. In contrast to the self-righteous, self-centered ecclesiasticism of the Pharisees, they viewed the religious situation with alarm. They believed in the Law as did the orthodox party, but they went farther. They felt that the people, outwardly following the Pharisees, were really far from the true worship of God. The writer of I En. 93: 9 says of his own generation, "Many will be its deeds, and all its deeds will be apostate." The popular preacher who wishes to stir the multitudes finds his best ammunition in the sins of his age. Criticism of the existing situation, the raising of concrete problems in life and thinking, is the one means

[1] See above, pp. 97-100; cp. the remark of Oesterley, *Apocrypha*, p. 199: "There is no doubt that the whole of this (apocalyptic) literature was rejected, ultimately, by the Palestinian Jewish authorities, the Pharisees."

for inducing real thought, as the psychologists tell us. The apocalyptic evangelist, with his fundamental dogma of a present evil world, could let loose his woes against everything and everybody, as Enoch does in the immediate context of the verse just quoted. And against this background, sufficiently awesome to any but the most sophisticated conscience, he could paint the still more moving terrors of the "wrath to come," and the glories of the new age that was to follow it.

As we have already noted, political and social discontent among the Jews had no way in which to express itself except apocalypticism. The Zelots are a case in point. They were "waiting for the consolation of Israel," but they wished to work while they waited. No Zelot dreamed that Jewish arms could overthrow the Roman Empire. What they did believe was that God was not dead; that if, trusting in him, they raised the standard of revolt, he must come to their aid against their enemies. They had suffered enough; the time of their redemption must be at hand. The Zelots were Pharisees and legalists—plus. They harbored a sense of social and religious wrongs, which fired them with an enthusiastic and fanatical faith that the Pharisees never could know. They were also apocalyptists plus. To the ardent dissatisfaction and fanatical hope of apocalypticism they added a restless energy which insisted upon "direct action." Social unrest was, as ever, the active dynamite in the situation. Apocalypticism was the burning fuse which set it off.

As the "people of the land" stood over against these parties, they bowed before the punctilious sanctity of the Pharisee and the sacred learning of the scribe. But it was the apocalyptist who warmed their hearts and stirred their enthusiasm. It was only the apocalyptist, and, above all, the Zelot, who had a program of action. Therefore, in Jesus' day, the multitude were constantly in danger of getting out of hand and going over to Zelotism. A generation after Jesus' death the opposition of official Ju-

daism was overwhelmed and even many of the rabbis became ardent revolutionists.

II. Jesus and the Prophets

The question before us is, What was the attitude of Jesus toward these outstanding religious movements of his day? Here were two ideals of life, two philosophies of history, two views of the universe, not mutually exclusive and easily differentiated as viewed by men of that generation, but inextricably intertwined and confused, so that the modern student, with all the history of two thousand years before his eyes, with the verdict of posterity to help him, finds it difficult to disentangle the threads. Was Jesus able to see to the bottom of the turgid waters of partisan controversy and pick out the real pearls that lay hidden beneath the surface? And having done so, was he able to make their beauties clear to his contemporaries, who were far from seeing so clearly as he?

Another element in the problem was the political situation and the relation of religion to politics.[1] The Sadducees were traitorous opportunists. The Pharisees were doctrinaire indifferentists, so long as their religion was not threatened. The Zelots were doctrinaire and fanatical revolutionists. Because both Pharisees and Sadducees were apathetic to the wrongs under which the people suffered, the Zelots were attracting a larger and larger following. To the clear vision of Jesus it was evident that disaster lay ahead, unless some radically new, constructive program could capture the mind of the rank and file of the nation. There was need of something as attractive and inspiring as the fanaticism of the Zelots, with their promise of immediate emancipation from servitude to Rome and thorough righting of all wrongs, something that

[1] Sharman, *The Teaching of Jesus about the Future* (Chicago, 1909), pp. 109-120. S. Liberty, *The Political Relationships of Christ's Ministry* (Oxford, 1916).

would counteract the legalism of the Pharisees and reform the abuses of the Sadducees. Where could such a program and the power to realize it be found? And how could it be put before the people so as to avoid the dangers of Zelotism?

While the answer to these questions is complicated, there is one element in it which is clear as day. Jesus did not belong to the orthodox party. There was no hope for the nation in Pharisaism. To be sure, he valued what was good in the Law. He came, not to destroy, but to fulfil it. Even the traditions, which, on the whole, he mercilessly assailed, had some good features in them. With regard to the petty tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, he could say, "These ye ought to have done, and not left the other (the matters of real righteousness) undone." What he fought against with all the strength of a clean conscience and a clear mind was the fallacy, which seems always to develop among lawyers, that the technicalities of law in themselves have some intrinsic value, entirely apart from the justice which they are supposed to promote. For Jesus, legalism, that puts the letter above the spirit, was anathema. He once said, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." It must have been a constant source of satisfaction to him that, from first to last, his staunchest opponents were found among the scribes and Pharisees. In so far as the Pharisees were loyal Jews he could approve them, but that which was most characteristic in the whole scribal movement, its exaggerated traditionalism and reactionary legalism, stood solidly in the path of all religious progress. What made the scribes and Pharisees, however, sons of their fathers who had killed the prophets was not their emphasis on the Law, but their indifference to the social wrongs and religious needs of the multitude, the substitution of legalism for righteousness. Jesus had no part with the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus was, then, decidedly unorthodox. Was his heterodoxy of the apocalyptic type? Did reaction against le-

galism drive him into the opposite camp? To view this question in the proper perspective and answer it adequately, we must remember another ideal, which seemed likely to be completely forgotten by the majority of Jesus' contemporaries, but which he recovered and made the very center of his own life and teaching, the prophetic conception of socialized religion. This, the highest view of man's relationships, human and divine, which any people before him had conceived, he enriched out of the experience of his race during the centuries since the Exile and out of his own unique and profound insight into the heart of the Heavenly Father, and he made it the center of his thought and the criterion of his judgments of contemporary life.

How far did the prophetic spirit lead him into opposition to apocalypticism? In general Jesus did not look at the world through the eyes of the apocalyptist. As we have seen,[1] the apocalyptic world view was pessimistic, deterministic, mechanical, external, and literalistic. Jesus was none of these. He may occasionally seem to despair of a "disloyal and sinful generation," and he knows that opposition, hardship, suffering, await both Master and disciple. But his world is not evil and growing constantly worse. It is ruled by a loving Heavenly Father, who clothes the lily and "is kind even to the ungrateful and the evil." Jesus was not an ascetic, matter was not evil.

He was not deterministic, mechanical, or external in his conception of morality and religion. Righteousness was not something that could be imposed from without. Rather it could be developed only from within, by human participation in God's purposes and labors. We may not be able to claim the support of the saying, "Lo, the kingdom of God is within you,"[2] because of uncertainty as to translation, but that the kingdom was for Jesus primarily a matter of the heart needs no proof. It is for the humble, the pure in heart, it must be received as a little child.

[1] See above, chap. V, sec. ii.

[2] Lk. 17:21; cp. Moffatt's translation, "in your midst."

Jesus seems to have had no belief that there were certain classes who were permanently excluded from the kingdom by birth or education or election. Only those who of their own free choice failed to do God's will would be cast out. Jesus was not literalistic in his use of the Old Testament. On the contrary he went back of the letter to the spirit of the word. Not the murderer merely, but the hater is condemned. Even more than that, he actually abrogated the old command, "eye for eye, tooth for tooth," putting forbearance and forgiveness in its place. Can one suppose for a moment that Jesus so valued the letter of prophecy that he would have insisted that it must all be fulfilled in detail, as the apocalyptist insisted? Certainly no word of Jesus gives any basis for such a supposition and the spirit of his teaching points in exactly the opposite direction.

Over against the thoroughgoing autocracy and externalism of the apocalyptic world view, then, he put a thoroughgoing spirituality and democracy. No kind of compulsion could make men good. Signs and miracles as such he entirely rejected.

> "If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced, not even if one rose from the dead."[1]
>
> "Why does this generation demand a Sign?
> I tell you truly, no Sign shall be given this generation."[2]

Such language is fundamentally inconsistent with the expectation of the conversion of the world into the Realm of God by a cosmic catastrophe or the appearance of a Messiah of the Clouds. Likewise inconsistent with a catastrophic or supernaturalistic coming of the kingdom are certain of Jesus' sayings in his parables. We must beware of reading into the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven modern ideas of evolutionary progress. It may well be that the thought uppermost in Jesus' mind was

[1] Lk. 16:31.
[2] Mk. 8:12.

that the kingdom was coming surely and in a mysterious fashion, unobserved and unobservable to the multitude. But the fact remains that here we lose sight entirely of any sudden break between the present and the future. The parable of the soils belongs less distinctly in the same category. The first petition of the Lord's prayer, particularly as interpreted in Matthew, who is elsewhere strongly apocalyptic, also falls naturally into line with a historical and genetic rather than a catastrophic conception of the coming of the new age. "Thy reign begin, thy will be done on earth as in heaven" suggests no falling stars, parting heavens, or rending rocks.

In another regard Jesus shows himself not a consistent eschatologist. In certain important aspects, the new age, the reign of God, has already begun. Jesus is already introducing the moral standards by which men are to live and by which they are to be judged. The powers of the kingdom are, therefore, already here also. Satan is mastered.[1] His demonic hosts are defeated. These facts are used specifically to prove the point that the kingdom is already here. "If it is by the finger of God that I cast demons out, then the Reign of God has reached you already."[2] Moreover the strifes and divisions which must precede the new age are being unhappily realized in the lives of Jesus' family and followers.[3] The anticipated forerunner has come.[4] The overthrow of the proud and the exaltation of the humble are already beginning, for the Gospel is preached to the poor, and God is revealing himself, not to the wise and learned, but to the simple-minded.[5]

If Luke 17:21 may not be pressed as an argument for

[1] Mk. 3:24-27; Lk. 10:18.
[2] Lk. 11:20; cp. 10:17 f.
[3] Lk. 12:52 ff.=Mt. 10:34 f.; cp. Mk. 13:12.
[4] Mk. 9:12=Mt. 17:11 ff.; Mt. 11:14. It is worth remarking that the coming of Elijah, both in the Old Testament, Mal. 4:5 f., and in the Talmud (Weber, *Jüd. Theol.*, pp. 352 ff.) is connected with a non-catastrophic coming of the kingdom.
[5] Lk. 7:22; 10:21.

an internal kingdom, it nevertheless can hardly be twisted out of the plain implication that the kingdom is already here. If there were no other passages that indicated such a view, the saying might be doubtful, but there are several distinct claims on the part of Jesus that he is actually inaugurating the reign of God. When John asks, "Are you the Coming One? Or are we to look for some one else?"[1] his answer is unequivocal. The prophetic promises of the time of salvation are being fulfilled. Why should they look farther? Jesus tells his disciples,

> "All has been handed over to me by my Father. . . .
> Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!
> For I tell you many prophets and kings have desired
> to see what you see,
> but they have not seen it;
> and to hear what you hear,
> but they have not heard it."[2]

When he raises the question, the disciples respond by plainly and emphatically acknowledging him to be the messiah.[3] His glory, to be sure, is not yet fully realized.[4] But we must remember that as yet no such idea as the "second coming" of the messiah had ever been conceived. The messianic triumph was still in the future, but the messiah was present with all the power in his hands that he wished to exercise. The day the ancients had seen by faith and longed to experience had come.

As Professor von Dobschütz, whom we have largely followed in the last two paragraphs, says,

> "The evidence collected is quite sufficient to prove that in the teaching of Jesus there is a strong line of what I should call *transmuted eschatology*. I mean eschatology transmuted in the sense that what was spoken of in Jewish eschatology as to come in the last days is

[1] Lk. 7:19=Mt. 11:3.
[2] Lk. 10:22-24.
[3] Mk. 8:27-9:1=Mt. 16:13-28=Lk. 9:18-27.
[4] Mk 10:37; 8:38.

> taken here as already at hand in the lifetime of Jesus; transmuted at the same time in the other sense that what was expected as an external change is taken inwardly: not all people seeing it, but Jesus' disciples becoming aware of it. . . . And in His company they enjoy all the happiness of the Messianic time."[1]

Taking only these materials into account, we must conclude that Jesus seems to have adopted the social idealism, the stern morality, and the religious fervor of the prophets and in that spirit to have used the language of apocalypticism. It is decidedly a "transmuted eschatology" which he gives us.

If, in the light of this conclusion, we turn to the story of the Temptation in the Wilderness, our judgment is confirmed. The account stands at the threshold of Jesus' ministry and likewise of the interpretation of his purposes. He has just come from his baptism with the certain consciousness that he is to fulfil ancient prophecy and usher in the reign of God. What sort of a kingdom is it to be? First he rejects the conception widely current among the people that it was to be principally meat and drink. He had not come to inaugurate a period of paradisiacal plenty, when men could eat without effort.[2] He would not experiment with turning stones into bread that he might later win a following from the multitude. Second, following the Lucan order, he had not come to reestablish the Davidic kingdom. He had no sympathy with the aims or methods of the Zelots. The subjugation of the kingdoms of this world was not synonymous with the establishment of God's reign. Finally he rejected the idea of a catastrophic interference from heaven, with an Enochic Messiah of the Clouds[3] whose angels should overcome the resistance of the wicked and the inertia of the

[1] *Eschatology of the Gospels* (London, 1910), pp. 150 f.
[2] See above, pp. 124.
[3] See above, pp. 126 f.

indifferent, and, whether man would or no, set up the reign of God on earth.[1]

Jesus seems, then, to stand in the position of completely rejecting the ideals and hopes of apocalypticism and of being entirely out of sympathy with its views of God, the universe, and the future. What had he to put in their place?

To understand the distinctively new element which Jesus introduced into the conception of the kingdom and the messiah, one must attempt to look at Jesus' problem as it appeared to him and his disciples. How could Jesus claim to be the messiah, when everything in his life and surroundings seemed to contradict the immemorial expectations of his people? How could he define his position and that of his disciples to himself and to them? For his explanation he went back to the last and greatest of the real prophets of Israel, to Second Isaiah.[2] How far he was directly dependent we cannot be sure. He never expressly refers to the "suffering servant" or quotes the language of Isaiah on the subject, but he has plainly made the ideas of the ancient seer his own.

The knowledge of God as Father was to emancipate the world and transform it into a realm of God. He alone who served and suffered could bring this divine "knowledge" into the hearts of men. All those who wished to enjoy a place in his realm must follow in his train.[3] This method, moreover, of bringing in the kingdom of God involved his own death. If all who wished to enter the kingdom must suffer, he who was supremely intrusted with the task of bringing it in must pour out his soul unto death. As Professor Selbie says,

> "In the mind of Jesus His death bore a relation to human sin and need analogous to that attributed to the sacrifices and offerings of the old dispensation.

[1] See the writer's article, "The Temptation of Jesus Eschatologically and Socially Interpreted," *Biblical World*, LIII 4 (July, 1919), 402-407.

[2] See above, pp. 73 ff.

[3] Mk. 10:35-45.

> However far certain subsequent interpretations of the fact may take us from the actual mind of Christ, there can be no doubt that the whole conception originated with Him. The fact is the more remarkable because Jesus was not in any sense a gloomy ascetic. He knew and shared with other men the joy of living; but He knew, too, the deeper joy of redemption, sacrifice, and service."[1]

Curiously enough, the influence of these great innovating ideas of redemption of the Second Isaiah seemed to disappear with their author. Through all the history of Judaism, no one had responded to this great ideal of the unknown prophet of the Exile. Job, Jonah, the Psalms themselves, had never come to this vision of the meaning of suffering or this solution of the problem of the coming of the new age. In this more than anything else Jesus transcended his race and his age completely. In this more than anything else he signified himself entirely out of sympathy with the apocalyptic spirit. It knew nothing of the coming of God to the world by way of the cross. It knew nothing of suffering for the world, and above all for the foes of God and his elect. It knew nothing of going after the lost and erring and, by suffering for them, bringing them back to God. It knew nothing of washing away the sins of the world and of destroying sinners by transforming them willingly into children of God. It knew only a terrible day of vengeance, when all who were not within the fold should suffer the just deserts of their sins, a terrible catastrophe which by divine might should wipe out sinners and eradicate evil from the face of the whole earth. The ideal of the "suffering servant" more than anything else in the teaching of Jesus presents an element that is entirely irreconcilable with the apocalyptic conception of God's relation to mankind.

Here also was a solution of the political problem. If Jesus' people could have seen themselves as the bearers of

[1] *Aspects of Christ* (Paris, n. d.), p. 139.

God's message to the world by the path of suffering, if they could have seen that this message, carried in this manner, would eventually bring in, not the kingdom of which the apocalyptist dreamed, but the reign of God's will in the hearts of men—publicans and sinners, Greeks and Romans, and all the rest, then they could have endured for a time Roman misrule; and their own internal differences and the injustices which they suffered from one another would have disappeared, while they waited for the larger revelation of God in the world. They have had to suffer all down through the ages as no other race in history. Who would say they have not notably helped by those very sufferings in bringing to the world the knowledge of God. But they have fallen short of the supreme contribution because they have rejected Jesus, just as their so-called Christian persecutors have done.

III. The Apocalyptic Element in the Teaching of Jesus

If we were to stop here, the history of primitive Christianity and of modern Premillennialism would be equally unintelligible. There are apocalyptic elements in the teachings of Jesus which have been too often overlooked or explained away. As we have seen,[1] Jewish apocalypticism was a retrogressive movement, falling far below the level of prophecy in its religious spirit, its moral idealism, and, above all, its practical social applications. Yet it formed the sole connecting link between that former Augustan age of Hebrew religious achievement and Jesus' own time. It was the sole medium for the expression of political and industrial discontent and social aspiration. Probably no one could have been found among the whole people holding the ancient prophetic ideals who did not with them combine the apocalyptic-eschatological program.

[1] Above chap. V, sec. ii.

Even the scribes, although their whole outlook on life tended to still the spirit of prophecy, probably subscribed in general to the ethical ideals and the social hopes of the apocalyptists. One who wished to reform Judaism and reintroduce the prophetic religion would be obliged to look for support among those who were stirred by the apocalyptic spirit. He would be forced to find in the concepts and ideals of apocalypticism, which were perfectly familiar to all, the means for interpreting his own ideals to the people. Even if he chose to go back to the prophets and make use of their language and moral standards, he would have seemed to the people to use the language of apocalypticism, for the prophets were interpreted in an apocalyptic sense.

The multitudes whom Jesus addressed, the disciples whom he chose, knew only the world view of the apocalyptist. There were no categories in which Jews could think, no language they could use in reference to the reform of society but those of apocalypticism. It was the one medium Jesus could use to present his message to his age.

The prominence of the eschatological element in the teaching of Jesus would call for no emphasis were it not for the fact that so many people seem to read their Bibles with their eyes closed. No one can deny that the kingdom of God was the central theme of Jesus. His preaching begins with it: "The time has now come, God's reign is near: repent and believe in the gospel."[1] Most of his parables are introduced by the phrase, "the kingdom of God is like unto . . ." The first petition of the model prayer is "thy kingdom come." The superscription on his cross was "the king of the Jews." But what did he mean by the coming of the kingdom? Again one cannot deny that he uses the language of the Jewish apocalyptist. The Son of man is to come "in the glory of his

[1] Mk. 1:15.

Father with the holy angels."[1] To the high priest Jesus said, "You will all see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven."[2] It is not something in the far distant future to which he refers. "This adulterous and sinful generation"—it is a thoroughly apocalyptic phrase he uses—will soon be startled out of its indifference. "I tell you truly," Jesus said to his disciples, "there are some of those standing here who will not taste death till they see the coming of God's Reign with power."[3] Referring to various apocalyptic predictions he said, "I tell you truly, the present generation will not pass away till all this happens."[4] The disciples are exhorted, "Take care, keep awake and pray; you never know the time."[5] The Son of man was to come as suddenly as the lightning, as unexpectedly as a thief in the night or the Flood in the days of Noah.[6] We seem driven to conclude, with von Dobschütz, that there is

> "a large enough genuine stock of eschatological sayings of Jesus to prove that He Himself believed in a change of all things which would come quickly, and not later than the end of His own generation; the kingdom of God would then be established in its full glory and happiness by His own coming in power and glory."[7]

The most extensive body of materials in the gospels bearing upon eschatology is found in Mark 13 and the parallels in Matthew and Luke, containing the so-called "gospel apocalypse," better called Markan, because it came originally from that gospel. Within this chapter one set of verses (7, 8, 14-20, 24-29) stands quite by itself. When we turn to their study after reading the Jewish apocalypses, we cannot but be impressed by the very great

[1] Mk. 8:38.
[2] Mk. 14:62. See I En. 62:5.
[3] Mk. 9:1.
[4] Mk. 13:30.
[5] Mk. 13:33.
[6] Mt. 24:26 f.=Lk. 17:23 f.; Mt. 24:43, 37=Lk. 12:39; 17:26 f.
[7] *Eschatology of the Gospels*, p. 123 f.

similarity. This group has exactly the tone and outlook of apocalypticism. Wars and rumors of wars, famines and earthquakes, followed by more terrible sufferings and catastrophes until the limit of endurance is reached, finally a universal cataclysm; then the end with the Son of man, as in I En. 46, appearing on the clouds of heaven: there can be no doubt as to the affinities of such a picture. Almost every phrase can be paralleled in earlier apocalyptic literature. Moreover, these verses are in contradiction to other teachings of Jesus, for, whereas he plainly insists his coming is to be sudden and entirely unexpected, here we are told of various signs by which we may forecast it. He does not elsewhere teach that the world is to grow worse or that the end is universal disruption.

The inconsistency of these verses with the teaching of Jesus elsewhere and their likeness to ordinary Jewish apocalyptic have led many scholars to the conclusion that they were not spoken by Jesus. As Dr. Muirhead has well said, "In a private conversation with two or three disciples Jesus would not speak in a sustained style of eschatological commonplace."[1] Read by themselves, these verses make a consistent whole. They are, therefore, regarded as an apocalyptic fly-sheet written by some Jewish Christian shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem and in the course of their circulation among the Christian congregations of Palestine mistakenly attributed to Jesus.[2] We

[1] *The Terms of Life and Death in the Old and New Testaments*, (London, 1908), p. 136; cp. p. 123 f.; see Moffatt, *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York, 1914), pp. 207-209. For a further discussion of these verses see chap. VII, sec. ii.

[2] The question asked Jesus in Mk. 13:4 relates to the destruction of Jerusalem. That Jesus may have discussed this subject is probable. No Jew could believe that Jerusalem would be destroyed before the end of the world, and, therefore, would connect any pronouncement on the latter subject with the former (cp. Mk. 13:1-4 with Mt. 24:1-3.) Hence the inclusion of the "apocalyptic fly-sheet" with Jesus' discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem.

therefore reach the conclusion that we cannot use these verses to determine his thought.

If this Markan apocalypse is excised, there still remains a large number of passages in this chapter and elsewhere in the gospels which show that Jesus was thoroughly at home in the apocalypses. From such passages it would appear that he taught substantially as follows:

(1) Persecution and suffering are to be the lot of his disciples for a time; vindication and reward are to follow. "Look to yourselves . . . You will be hated by all men on account of my name; but he will be saved who holds out to the very end."[1]

(2) He is the "Son of man," now preaching and healing and suffering; eventually to return in divine power to inaugurate the kingdom of God in its full manifestation.[2]

(3) False prophets will continually arise to proclaim the nearness of his advent for this purpose,[3] but they will invariably be mistaken, for he will appear suddenly and unexpectedly; no one can tell the time in advance.[4]

(4) Yet he is to come very soon, within the lifetime of his contemporaries.[5]

(5) He will come in glory, on the clouds, with the angels, sitting at the right hand of power, thus combining the ideal human messiah of the Psalms of Solomon with the supernatural Son of man of Enoch, the first in his present earthly life, the second in the age to come.[6]

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[1] Mk. 13:9-13.
[2] Mk. 8:28-9:1.
[3] Mk. 13:5 f., 21-23; Lk. 17:20-23.
[4] Mk. 13:32; Mt. 24:37 ff.=Lk. 17:26-29; Mt. 24:26 f.=Lk. 17-23 f. If there is one thing above another which the eschatological teaching of Jesus emphasizes, it is that it is absolutely futile to attempt to prognosticate when he will appear. It is contrary both to the letter and to the spirit of his teaching to try to calculate the time of his coming, or even to forecast it. See Mk. 13:6, 32 f.
[5] Mk. 13:30; 9:1; 14:25, 62.
[6] Mk. 8:38; 14:62.

(6) His coming will bring judgment, purely on moral lines.[1]

These views are inconsistent with the "apocalyptic flysheet" which Mark incorporated into the gospel, and with much early and modern Christian teaching on the subject. But they are consistent within themselves and they do not contradict the prophetic principles, which, as we have seen, Jesus made the center of his life and message. How now are we to interpret these sayings in view of the development of apocalypticism before Jesus and the subsequent history of Christianity and the world?

IV. The Meaning of Jesus' Apocalyptic Language

Many ways of dealing with the apocalyptic material in the teachings of Jesus have been found.

(1) The premillennial view, which takes all that Jesus said literally, will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. Here it is enough to say that its literalism is as contrary to the spirit of Jesus as it is to that of modern historical inquiry, and furthermore, that both the Bible and nineteen centuries of history contradict its fundamental propositions.

(2) Another method is to distinguish between the sayings of Jesus, particularly in Mk. 13, noting that the original question had to do only with the overthrow of Jerusalem. This was what his own generation was to experience. To this prediction were added other genuine sayings which can be fulfilled only in the final destruction of the world and his coming literally as depicted on the clouds of heaven. Part of the passage thus has been fulfilled, part awaits fulfillment. This view is essentially premillennial. It escapes the objections merely to certain

[1] Mk. 13:33-37; Mt. 24:42-51=Lk. 12:39-46; Mt. 25:1-46; etc.

details of that interpretation; otherwise it is as impossible as the balder premillennialism.[1]

(3) Many would adopt the same attitude toward all the apocalyptic material in the gospels that we have taken toward the "little apocalypse" of Mark 13. It is all supposed to be interpolated into the teaching of Jesus by his disciples, who were themselves so thoroughly apocalyptic that they entirely misunderstood Jesus and ascribed to him language that he never used.

(4) More satisfactory to some is the theory that Jesus did use practically all the language ascribed to him, but in different connections and contexts from those given in our present gospels, so that his meaning was not what it is made to appear by the grouping in which we now find his words, the present arrangement being due to this same misunderstanding on the part of his disciples.

We cannot deny that to some extent his disciples misunderstood and misreported Jesus. But both these theories prove too much. They are both open to the same objections: first, that they set up modern, occidental standards by which to judge the ancient, oriental Jesus, and, second, that they completely undermine the trustworthiness of our gospel records and throw us back upon purely subjective reconstructions of the character and teachings of the Master. On either theory, the disciples, in reporting Jesus, made him a man after their own heart. The modern scholar counters by making a Jesus after his own heart, and we have nothing left upon which we may depend. The *reductio ad absurdum* of this method of writing history is found in the "Christ-myth theory" of Drews, Smith, and Robertson.[2] Most people will prefer the disciples' reconstruction to an equally arbitrary modern one.

[1] For a statement and criticism of this view see M. S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalyptics* (New York, 1898), pp. 217 ff.

[2] See Drews, *The Christ-Myth* (Chicago, [1911], translated from the 3rd German ed. of 1910). On the other side see F. C. Conybeare, *The Historical Christ*, etc. (Chicago, 1914); S. J. Case, *The Historicity of Jesus* (Chicago, 1912).

(5) The theory according to which the language of Jesus is to be interpreted figuratively has much to recommend it. But again, it suffers from lack of historical criteria by which it may be tested, as does all figurative, or allegorical, interpretation. It overlooks the fact that the literal and the figurative were not carefully distinguished by the ancient—or modern—oriental. It inclines, like the third and fourth theories above, to make Jesus too modern. It does not reckon with the importance of the apocalyptic way of thinking in Jesus' time. The view according to which Jesus was foretelling literally the overthrow of Jerusalem and figuratively the progress of Christianity after that great crisis is open to the same, if not more serious, objections.[1]

The most serious objection to all these methods of interpretation is that they ignore or in many cases were elaborated in ignorance of Jewish apocalyptic literature. This objection applies even more to the literalistic and premillennial theories than it does to the critical attempts. All these theories, both literalistic and critical, are under suspicion of looking at Jesus through modern eyes, not taking into account the actual state of thought and feeling in the times when he lived. The thought of Jesus cannot be reproduced for us except as we put ourselves at once in the atmosphere of both prophet and apocalyptist. If we attempt to do that, we shall at least come nearer to "the mind of Christ."

Those who cannot believe that Jesus ever used and intended literally such language as we find ascribed to him overlook the uniqueness and incomprehensibility of genius. At best they make the Master only a more glorified Peter or John, a Jewish superprophet. If they are gifted neither with historical imagination nor a sense of humor—both are sometimes lacking to students of theology—they pare him down to what they can imagine themselves doing under the

[1] Cp. M. S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalyptics*, pp. 213-252.

given circumstances. No great leader of men does under the strain and stress of conflict when world issues are at stake what the scholar at his study table, peering through his myopic glasses, would consider the wise and sane thing to do. Great occasions demand great men. Movements of power demand words of power. Great opportunities demand great vision. Jesus has moved the world as has no other individual in the course of history. Can we restrict him to the kind of language and the kind of thoughts of which we are capable? The uniqueness of Jesus demanded unique expression. Should he give himself out to be a Hercules come to labor again on earth, or a Hermes come to lead souls to heaven? Manifestly absurd! Should he call himself simply the messiah? To the Pharisee or Sadducee that would have been as objectionable as Hercules or Hermes, perhaps more so. And it would have led to more serious complications with the multitude, for to them the title would have implied revolt against Rome, the restoration of the Davidic monarchy. How could he convey to the minds of men his conception of his mission? He chose to call himself the Son of man, and with the title to combine the language of Daniel and Enoch, and perhaps other, to us unknown apocalypses, describing the advent and achievements of this imposing character. What did such language mean to him and what does it means to us?

Jesus' self-consciousness, his estimate of his person and his mission, was unique. No sane human being, either before or since his time, has been able to use such a language of himself as he did. What does it imply? First, that he felt that he himself and no other was to realize the age-long expectations of his people. He was to inaugurate the reign of God. Under the circumstances of his baptism, the voice from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son," connoted a unique commission and consequently a unique relation to God. Therefore, he was the messiah. But, second, he was not merely a human king of the Da-

vidic line, rather something far above that. With Daniel and Enoch behind him, no Jew could use the title "Son of man" without connoting a relationship to God which no human being has ever claimed.[1]

When one puts together the three terms, Son of God, messiah, and Son of man, all of them titles which Jesus used or accepted as his by right, one must recognize that Jesus made a claim to a unique position in relation to God, man, and history. As the Enochic Son of man comes on the clouds of heaven and sits on the throne of judgment and glory, Jesus is to rule and judge. As all evil is to flee before that Son of man and all men are to worship him, so Jesus will eventually triumph. As the Son of man is to win a purely spiritual victory, so also will Jesus. As the Enochic Son of man is second only to God, so Jesus stands above all others as uniquely the "Son of the Father." Accepting the term Son of man in its apocalyptic meaning, one is driven to the conclusion that Jesus claimed a relation to God as his Son which can best be described by using the term which all the ages have allowed him as his due; he was divine. If we find him in other respects the "crystal Christ," then we must allow this claim of his and give him the worship and honor which the claim implies. In the light of Jewish usage Son of man constitutes a higher claim than Son of God. The interpretation of Jesus in the light of apocalypticism reinforces in an unexpected manner the "orthodox" view of his person.

The apocalyptic language of Jesus, then, may be said to record his self-consciousness, his faith in himself. Still more truly may it be said to record his faith in God and in man. Without any preliminary of apostasy and degeneration, of tempest and earthquake, of darkened sun and falling stars, his enemies and his own should see him coming on the clouds of heaven. The cause for which he and

[1] See above, pp. 126 ff.

his little band of despised followers stood, the glad tidings to the poor, the meek, the suffering, deliverance to captives, the opening of blind eyes, should triumph, and that not in the far distant future, but even within that generation. Those who opposed him with their way of thinking and living should be judged in cataclysmic fashion. They themselves should see it. Secrets should be revealed; the inner character of men and movements should be made clear, when the day of his "apocalypse," his revealing, should come. Only the language of apocalypse could express the certainty, the vividness, the overwhelming power of this faith in the heart of Jesus.

> "Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this disloyal and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of the Father with the holy angels. I tell you truly," he said to them, "there are some of those standing here who will not taste death till they see the coming of God's reign with power. . . . You will all see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of Heaven."[1]

The title "Son of man" connoted for Jesus, however, not only the certainty of victory, but the path by which it was to be won. It cannot be shown that the phrase had been used especially to emphasize human weakness and frailty, though it does seem to be employed in Ezekiel[2] with something of that suggestion. Yet it appears repeatedly in the gospels in connection with references to Jesus' service and suffering.[3] It seems hardly possible that such constant collocation of the title with these ideas, which, as we have seen,[4] were Jesus' unique contribution to the idea of the work of messiah, can be merely accidental. The title "Son of man" Jesus fills with the double

[1] Mk. 8:38-9:1; 14:62.
[2] 2:1, 3, 6, 8; 3:1, 4; 4:1; 37:3; etc.
[3] Mk. 2:10; Lk. 6:22; 7:34; 9:58; Mk. 8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; Lk. 19:10; etc.
[4] See above, pp. 151 ff.

meaning of cross and crown, whether before him it had that wealth of signification or not. In any case it is quite plain that, firmly as Jesus believed in the coming of the reign of God, he believed with equal certainty that it could come only by the method of suffering and service. The path to victory passed over Golgotha. And Jesus freely chose to follow that path. The title embodies the certainty of his faith, the unreservedness of his devotion, the fullness of his courage. He was willing to make the supreme sacrifice in order that God might reign in the hearts of men and the world of humankind.

Since it implies this, the phrase also defines his attitude toward Zelotism or any conception of the kingdom which was purely material and external. Only divine power could lead men to the course of action which he deemed essential to the coming of the kingdom. The coming of the Son of man on the clouds, which implied a heavenly, supernatural coming of the kingdom, was the obvious way for him to express his conception of the manner of its realization. It made it perfectly clear that he was not planning revolt against Rome. The kingdom was to be spiritual before it could be social, an internal power before it could bear external fruit. It must win its victories by spiritual forces.

In contradistinction to the easy-going quietism of the Pharisees, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom as the one pearl worth having, the one treasure worth seeking; one should be willing to sacrifice an eye or a hand for it, nay, life itself; one ought always to pray and not to faint, until God should avenge his importunate elect. Jesus could not sit down and wait for a far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves with ordered, unhurried evolution. The kingdom of God must come by conflict. It is not true that it can come easily, by a gradual growth, or by the faithful keeping of God's laws. Men cannot sleep and rise night and day, while it grows like the grain. It will continue to grow no matter what this or that man may do,

for God's purposes are sure, and some day righteousness will triumph. But there must be many a conflict with the powers of evil, many a crisis, many a catastrophe to help it on its march. Therefore, there was full justification, also, for the element of the catastrophic which Jesus introduced into his conception of the kingdom.

But the question still remains: Did Jesus really believe that after his death he would come again visibly to reign on earth? Did he really expect his own second coming? Did he use the language of apocalypticism literally or figuratively? We must beware of demanding of an oriental nineteen centuries ago a literal accuracy in the use of language which one expects in a modern scientific treatise. Jesus was a prophet, a poet, an oriental, an ancient. The language of apocalypticism met his needs, satisfied his faith, and expressed his feelings better than any other that was available. We cannot suppose that he deliberately used language in a figurative sense when he knew that his disciples would understand it literally. Nor can we suppose that he consciously accommodated himself to their poorer and less spiritual views, when all the time he was fully aware of the real truth. This implies a certain disingenuousness which does not comport with the crystal purity of his life.

It were better to admit that his humanity involved certain limitations, that just as he was limited to the language of his people and the unscientific ideas of his time, so in this matter he was "limited" to the highest and most spiritual of the messianic conceptions of his age and used language which did not express the full truth. Though perhaps dimly conscious that it was unsatisfactory he used it because, perforce, there was no other language to use. At least one can say with Fathers Loisy and Tyrrell[1] that the language of apocalypticism presents great truths in

[1] Loisy, *The Gospel and the Church* (New York, 1904), pp. 120 f.; Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross Roads* (London, 1910), pp. 87, 94, 100 ff.

powerful symbols, the most powerful that could be employed at that time, or, for that matter, since. We express the same truths more intellectually or rationally, perhaps, but not more vigorously or appealingly.

The result of the study of Jesus' teaching is to leave us with two contradictory elements only partially synthesized in the gospel records, perhaps even in his own thinking not fully fused. There was an apocalyptic element, which to most minds connoted a certain external, mechanical scheme of the future, and a prophetic element, which was spiritual and internal as well as social. That any real genius, any virile leader in the world's thinking, is consistent, the study of philosophy and religion has long ago disproved. Every such pioneer solves certain problems but overlooks others, and even creates new ones, leaving them behind for his successors. Jesus has done more to solve the problems of the world, both theoretical and practical, than any one else who has ever lived. But there are still problems left and apocalypticism is one of them. That down through all the ages there have persisted, side by side, two views of the future outcome of his work, one millennarian, the other social and spiritual, is proof enough of the contradiction within his teaching. We shall go on in the two subsequent chapters to discuss these views as they appear in the New Testament and primitive Christianity, and thus try to obtain a clearer view of what Jesus meant.

CHAPTER VII

A LIVING AND BLESSED HOPE

I. The Primitive Apostolic Faith

WHEN one turns from Jesus to his immediate followers, the profound influence of Jewish apocalypticism is at once apparent. Not that the prophetic spirit is wanting, but it seems everywhere to have been mediated by the apocalyptic movement and to have taken on the characteristic coloring of the latter. It is plain that all Jesus' earliest followers had been firm believers in Jewish apocalyptic. Sympathy with the poor and oppressed, the expectation of a tremendous reversal of conditions which should overthrow the rich and powerful and elevate the weak and humble, the certainty that wickedness would be judged and punished and righteousness recognized and rewarded, the faith that all this was to be wrought by a supernaturalistic, catastrophic interference from heaven, and the vivid confidence that it was to happen in the immediate future—all these outstanding characteristics of the primitive Christian hope mark it as derived directly from apocalypticism.

There are various marks which distinguish this early Christian hope from the usual forms of Jewish eschatology. Little is said about the world growing worse. Sins are seen and rebuked. But the end is so near, the need of repentance so pressing, the opportunity of forgiveness and the hope of salvation so glorious, that there is no time for evils to grow worse and worse, no inclination to paint a gloomy picture of the present. So vivid was their faith,

so sustaining their hope, that one cannot speak of pessimism in connection with those early Christians. Moreover their expectation of the speedy realization of their hopes was clouded by no uncertainty. They were already living in the last days. The Spirit, specifically promised to be poured out after the restoration of all things,[1] was already here, a foretaste of the glories that should follow. They might at any time, then, expect to see the other, terrible portents which belonged to the last days, the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood.[2] Joel's confused order of the last events of the present age caused them no difficulty, for in another particular they had departed far more significantly from the accepted views as to the coming of the kingdom—in their view of the "second advent" of Christ.

The one thing that above all others distinguished the faith of the early Christians from that of their Jewish fellow enthusiasts was their contention that Jesus, who had taught in Galilee and died on the cross at Jerusalem, was the messiah. By his marvelous deeds, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, he had proved his claim and won to himself the right to come in the fashion of the Enochic Son of man on the clouds of heaven, and, when he did so come, he would judge the world, punishing the unbelieving and sinful, rewarding all who had put their trust in him, and inaugurating the reign of God. This was the essence of the *evangelion,* the glad tidings, that through the return, the second coming of Jesus the Christ, salvation was to come to all those who were suffering in this present evil age. The "second coming" was, then, the means of explaining away the reproach of the cross. Only by death and resurrection could the man Jesus become the supernatural, divinely glorious Judge. It is a unique testimony to the power of Jesus' personality that his disciples, men and women who had walked and talked and eaten

[1] Joel 2:21-30.
[2] Joel 2:31.

with him, could believe that he deserved such a distinction. It is a testimony, also, to the influence of Jewish apocalypticism on their thinking that they were able to find no other category under which to subsume their impression of that personality. That is not surprising, however, for, as we have seen, Jesus had found himself driven to the same language to express his consciousness of his person and mission. In this they demonstrated themselves to be his true disciples.

To obtain any sure basis for an interpretation of the Christian hope of the future, it is necessary to study briefly the views which are presented by the various New Testament writers. We begin with the book of Acts, not because it was the earliest written, but because it alone records the history of the Christian body during the two decades immediately following the death of Jesus. It is a striking confirmation of our estimate of the importance of the apocalyptic way of thinking in the foundation of Christianity, that this book, written one or perhaps two generations after Jesus' crucifixion by an educated Greek physician who might be expected to have no understanding or sympathy for such doctrines, records so faithfully those apocalyptic traits which marked Jesus and the other New Testament writings. The chief source of the joy and power of these first pilgrims in "the Way" was the Spirit which in accordance with the promise had been sent into their hearts. The Spirit meant to them two things: first, an inward buoyancy and feeling of power because of the sense of the divine presence; and, second, a hopefulness and an indifference to difficulty and danger because the Spirit was an assurance that they were already in the last times and that Jesus must speedily return to "restore the Realm to Israel." The theory of the "second coming" must have been born immediately after the resurrection, for there were no other explanations hazarded by any early Christians which, to a Jewish apocalyptist, would reconcile the messiahship of Jesus with his death. Even though we

might theoretically doubt Luke's ability to find reliable sources and accurately report them, the words of Peter in the Temple ring true to our expectations:

> "The God of our fathers has glorified Jesus his servant, whom you delivered up and repudiated before Pilate. . . . You killed the pioneer of Life. But God raised Him from the dead. . . . This was how God fulfilled what He had announced beforehand by the lips of all the prophets, namely the sufferings of His Christ. Repent then, and turn to have your sins blotted out, so that a breathing-space may be vouchsafed you, and that the Lord may send Jesus your long-decreed Christ, who must be kept in Heaven till the period of the great Restoration."[1]

The first Christian whose writings have come down to us intact is Paul. Paul was a Pharisee, educated in the rabbinical school at Jerusalem. If our estimate of Jewish legalism is correct,[2] he probably was opposed to the Jewish apocalyptic movements or at least not interested in them, although, no doubt, familiar with their characteristic features. Perhaps one of the elements of Christianity which made his persecution the more bitter and his conversion the more difficult was his adherence to the cold legalism of his scribal teachers and his dislike of the unbridled enthusiasm and irregularity of apocalypticism. If so, when he was converted, the change was complete. His description of his hope in I Thessalonians is the most apocalyptic of all the New Testament outside the Book of Revelation.

> "We would like you, brothers, to understand about those who are asleep in death. You must not grieve for them, like the rest of men who have no hope. Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then it follows that by means of Jesus God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. For we tell you, as the Lord has told us, that we, the living, who survive till

[1] Ac. 3:13-21.

[2] See above, pp. 92-96, 140-143.

> the Lord comes, are by no means to take precedence of those who have fallen asleep. The Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a loud summons, when the archangel calls and the trumpet of God sounds;[1] the dead in Christ will rise first; then we the living, who survive, will be caught up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall be with the Lord for ever. . . . As regards the course and periods of time, brothers, you have no need of being written to. You know perfectly well that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night; when 'all's well' and 'all is safe' are on the lips of men, then all of a sudden Destruction is upon them, like pangs on a pregnant woman—escape there is none. But, brothers, you are not in the darkness for the Day to surprise you like thieves; you are all sons of the Light and sons of the day. . . . For God destined us not for Wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that waking in life or sleeping in death we should live together with him."[2]

It would appear that the Thessalonian brethren put the wrong emphasis on these words of Paul. They understood him to say that the coming of the Lord was to be momentarily expected, and many, therefore, gave up their usual avocations to wait for his advent. Consequently, in a second letter, he was compelled to elaborate his eschatology further. He finds occasion early in this missive to call attention to the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked in that great day:

> "All the persecutions and the troubles in which you are involved . . . are proof positive of God's equity; you are suffering for the realm of God, and he means to make you worthy of it—since God considers it but just

[1] Cp. I Co. 15:52; an idea originating in the Old Testament use of the trumpet to call the people to worship and to war; first apocalyptically used in Ex. 19:16; Jer. 51:27; Is. 27:13; Ps. Sol. 11:1, 3; cp. Plummer, *Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (London, 1909), pp. 336 f.

[2] I Th. 4:13-5:10.

to repay with trouble those who trouble you,
and repay you who are troubled (as well as us)
with rest and relief,
when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven
together with the angels of His power in flaming
fire,
to inflict punishment on those who ignore God,
even on those who refuse obedience to the gospel
of our Lord Jesus,
men who will pay the penalty of being destroyed
eternally
from the presence of the Lord
and from the glory of his might,
when He comes to be glorified in His saints
and to be marvelled at in all believers
on that day."[1]

Then he turns to their special difficulty. The Lord is surely coming, and that within their lifetime, but the time is not yet.

"With regard to the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ and our muster before him, I beg you, brothers, not to let your minds get easily unsettled or excited by any spirit of prophecy or any declaration or any letter purporting to come from me, to the effect that the Day of the Lord is already here. Let nobody delude you into this belief, whatever he may say. It will not come till the Rebellion takes place first of all, with the revealing of the Lawless One, the doomed One, the adversary who vaunts himself above and against every so-called god or object of worship, actually seating himself in the temple of God with the proclamation that he himself is God. Do you not remember I used to tell you this when I was with you? Well, you can recall now what it is that restrains him from being revealed before his appointed time. For the secret force of lawlessness is at work already; only, it cannot be revealed till he who at present restrains it is removed.

Then shall the Lawless One be revealed,
whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of
his lips
and quell by his appearing and arrival—

[1] II Th. 1:4-10.

that One whose arrival is due to Satan's activity,
with the full power, the miracles and portents, of falsehood,
and with the full deceitfulness of evil for those who are doomed to perish,
since they refuse to love the Truth that would save them.
Therefore God visits them with an active delusion,
till they put faith in falsehood,
so that all may be doomed who refuse faith in the Truth but delight in evil."[1]

It would appear that by the Lawless One he means the Antichrist and that the restraining power is the Roman Empire, which is delaying the coming crisis until the elect may be evangelized.

We have here a piece of apocalypticism such as appears nowhere in Jesus' teachings and in no other extant letter of Paul. Evidently it is a current belief which Paul accepted for a time at least. Elsewhere he seems to think only of the nearness of the expected change and to hope that it may come within his own lifetime. Five or six years after the Thessalonian correspondence he writes to the Corinthians,

"Considering the imminent distress in these days, it would be an excellent plan for you (the unmarried) to remain as you are. . . . I mean, brothers,
the interval has been shortened;
so let those who have wives live as if they had none,
let mourners live as if they were not mourning,
let the joyful live as if they had no joy, . . .
for the present phase of things is passing away."[2]

Only a year or two later he writes the Romans,

"And then you know what this Crisis means, you know it is high time to waken up; for Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. It is far on in the night, the day is almost here."[3]

[1] II Th. 2:1-12.
[2] I Co. 7:26-31.
[3] 13:11 f.

Something seems to have happened to persuade him that the end is nearer than he originally supposed.

Paul did not again use such definite language. But in one of his latest letters, written perhaps only a few months before his death, he says,

> "We are a colony of Heaven, and we wait for the Savior who comes from Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body that belongs to our low estate till it resembles the body of his Glory, by the same power that enables him to make everything subject to Himself."[1]
>
> "The Lord is at hand,"[2]

Paul's faith as to the future, as it may be deduced from the fugitive and incomplete materials in his letters, seems to have been as follows:

(1) Jesus' resurrection and ascension proved him to have been the messiah (Ro. 1:4).

(2) He had thus openly triumphed over the demonic powers, but the victory was not yet complete (Col. 2:15; I Co. 15:23-26, 54).

(3) When all the elect among the Gentiles had been saved, the Jews would turn to Christ and be restored according to the Old Testament promises (Ro. 11:25 ff.; Is. 59:15-21).

(4) There would be a final death struggle on the part of the powers of evil led by a "lawless one," or "man of sin" (later called Antichrist), but the final period of strife was temporarily postponed by the restraining hand of the Roman government (II Th. 2:3-12).[3]

[1] Ph. 3:20 f.

[2] Ph. 4:5. This very definite expectation of the immediate coming of Christ seems so flatly to contradict the tone and subject-matter of II Th. 2 that a number of eminent scholars have doubted the authenticity of that letter. Be that as it may, certainly the main emphasis of Paul is on the imminence of the Advent.

[3] See Bousset, *Antichrist Legend* (London, 1896), p. 133; Milligan *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians* (London, 1908), *ad loc.* Whether St. Paul held this view until his death is uncertain.

(5) When Christ's victory had been made final and complete, he would return from heaven (I Th. 4:16; II Th. 2:3-8; I Co. 15:23 f.; Ph. 3:20).

(6) Believers who had died meantime would then be raised; their spirits, which had been disembodied (unclothed), would reanimate their bodies, now transformed into a spiritual form (I Th. 4:14-16; II Co. 5:1-5; I Co. 15:35-44).

(7) Next believers who were alive would be given "spiritual bodies" and would be caught up into the air to meet the Lord (I Th. 4:16 ff.; Ro. 8:23; Ph. 3:21; I Co. 15:50-53).

(8) Then would begin an endless spiritual existence with the Lord (I Th. 4:17; I Co. 15:50), a reign of God (I Co. 15:28), in a transformed universe (Ro. 8:18-22), such as Isaiah (11:6-9) had pictured.[1]

(9) As to the judgment, though he often refers to it without indication of its time (Ro. 14:10; II Co. 5:10; Ro. 2:16), he elsewhere speaks of the coming of Christ as the day of the Lord (I Th. 5:2, 4; II Th. 1:10), or as the time of judgment (II Th. 1:7-10; I Co. 1:8; 3:13; 5:5).

(10) Christ is to be the judge (I Co. 4:4 f.).

(11) The time of Christ's return is entirely uncertain, but is not far off (I Th. 5:1 ff.; I Co. 7:29-31; Ro. 13:11).

(12) Paul solves the contradiction between the Kingdom of God and the messianic kingdom by making the latter the present time of imperfection and unremitting strife (I Co. 15:24 f.), while God is to reign in a perfect world after the evil powers are overthrown (I Co. 15:50; 5:9 f.). There is no millennium in Paul's eschatology.[2]

[1] See above, pp. 55 f., 83.

[2] I can find no evidence of development in Paul's eschatology, if one does not use the Pastorals (see below pp. 188 f.). It is not to be expected, since his letters cover only about a dozen years at the end of his life. For both sides of the argument, see Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 379-405; and Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things* (New York, 1904), pp. 24 f., 163 f., 262-273.

About the time of Paul's death, in all probability, Peter came to Rome. While he was there, and before his martyrdom, which may have occurred near the time of that of his great friend and rival, he dictated to Silvanus, Paul's old travelling companion, the first letter which goes under his name. It does not contain any considerable body of apocalyptic material, but its occasional allusions indicate practically the same standpoint, if hardly the same vivid expectation, that Paul maintained. God, he says, has begotten us "anew to a life of hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . . to an unscathed, inviolate, unfading inheritance, . . . kept in heaven for you, . . . till you do inherit the salvation which is all ready to be revealed at the last hour," to you who after proof of faith in manifold trials will receive "praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."[1] They are to "put their hope for good and all in the grace that is coming to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ."[2] They are living "at the end of the ages."[3] "The end of all is near,"[4] and the judgment is imminent.[5] Their sufferings are but for a little while.[6] The humble will in due time be exalted.[7]

Jesus has triumphed; he is "at God's right hand—for he went to heaven after angels, authorities, and powers celestial had been made subject to him."[8] They are to rejoice in sharing his sufferings, that they "may also rejoice and exult when his glory is revealed."[9] Peter is certain that, as a witness of the sufferings of Christ, he is also "to share the glory that shall be revealed,"[10] and that the pas-

[1] I Pt. 1:3-7.
[2] 1:13.
[3] 1:20.
[4] 4:7.
[5] 4:5 f.
[6] 5:10.
[7] 5:6 f.
[8] 3:22.
[9] 4:13.
[10] 5:1.

tors of the churches "will receive the unfading crown of glory, when the chief Shepherd shall make his appearance."[1]

II. The Judean Crisis

Shortly before the time when Peter and Paul bore final witness to their faith, there appeared in Judea, according to current theories,[2] a "fly-sheet," a brief tract such as might have been written on a single sheet of papyrus, predicting the end in the very near future. It was written by a Jew, probably a Jewish Christian, at the time when the crisis was ripening which resulted in the great Jewish war, and was occasioned by the increase of lawlessness and the unsettled state of affairs in the country due to Roman misrule and Jewish racial ambitions and apocalyptic hopes. There were many Christians who, as good Jews, could not believe anything would happen to Jerusalem until the end of the age. When they saw the plain evidences of the city's approaching downfall, they were convinced that the end was at hand.

As disentangled from our earliest gospel this little apocalypse runs as follows:

> "When you hear of wars and rumors of war, do not be alarmed; these have to come, but it is not the end yet. For nation will rise against nation, and realm against realm; there will be earthquakes here and there, and famines too. All that is but the beginning of the trouble.
>
> "But whenever you see the appalling Horror standing where he has no right to stand (let the reader note this), then let those who are in Judea fly to the hills; a man on the housetop must not go down into the house or go inside to fetch anything out of his house, and a man in the field must not turn back to get his coat. Woe to women with child and to women who give suck in those days! Pray it may not be winter when it comes, for those days will be days of misery, the like of which has never

[1] 5:4.

[2] See above, p. 155 ff.

been from the beginning of God's creation until now—no and never shall be. Had not the Lord cut short those days, not a soul would be saved alive; but he has cut them short for the sake of the elect whom he has chosen.

> But when that misery is past, in those days,
> the sun will be darkened
> and the moon will not yield her light,
> the Stars will drop from Heaven,
> and the orbs of the heavens will be shaken,

Then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. Then he will despatch his angels and muster the elect from the four winds, from the verge of earth to the verge of Heaven.

Let the fig tree teach you a parable. As soon as its branches turn soft and put out leaves, you know summer is at hand; so, whenever you see this happen, you may be sure He is at hand, at the very door."[1]

These few verses contain all the main features of Jewish eschatology: the warning signs and political disturbances,[2] the development of wickedness to its utmost limit ("the appalling Horror"),[3] the increase of distress and suffering to an unbearable extent,[4] then a great cosmic catastrophe,[5] followed by the appearance of the messiah on the clouds.[6] As we have already noted,[7] this whole picture has no affinities with Jesus' teaching on the subject except in its reference to the coming of the Son of man on the clouds. But if it does not represent the belief of Jesus, it does that of a very considerable portion of his followers during the first two generations after his death.

[1] Mk. 13:7, 8, 14-20, 24-29. Nearly all those who accept the hypothesis of the "little apocalypse" agree to the inclusion of all the above verses except 28 and 29; some include 30 f. See the various opinions cited, Moffatt, *Introduction*, pp. 207 ff.

[2] See above, pp. 67 f.

[3] See above, pp. 110 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] See above, pp. 116 f.

[6] See above, pp. 126 ff.

[7] See above, p. 156.

They looked at history through the medium of their apocalyptic beliefs to such an extent that the whole of life was colored by Jewish eschatology. They ignored all in Jesus' teaching that did not harmonize with this one dominant color. Fortunately they were not aware of the incongruity and let his teaching stand alongside of their unconscious additions and alterations.

As we have already remarked, many early Christians, particularly those of Jewish descent, connected the end of the age with the fall of Jerusalem. It certainly is true that this great crisis marked a new era in Christian, as well as Jewish, history. Judean Christianity, which still clung to the old rites and ceremonies and the sacred associations of the Holy City, received its death blow. Henceforth there could be no uncertainty as to the value of Jewish sacrifices, and faith in them received a rude shock. The Jewish Christians were driven away from their established center and scattered; perhaps many lost their lives.[1] At any rate, from this time on Jewish Christianity drops rapidly out of sight. But the end of the world had not yet come. The deliverance of the saints, both Jewish and Gentile, was still postponed, and Roman persecution tended to become more general and more severe. What then of the Christian hope?

Matthew's gospel is commonly regarded as a combination of three main elements: a collection of Jesus' sayings, probably made by Matthew himself; the Gospel of Mark; and certain special sources. The Markan apocalypse was incorporated bodily. Although probably writing after the fall of Jerusalem, the editor did not palpably alter his source to fit the facts. He merely changed certain phrases and added certain sayings of Jesus which enhance the apocalyptic tone of the section.

First of all, he plainly distinguished between the fall

[1] The bulk were led by an oracle to flee from the city while there was yet time. See Eusebius, *Church History*, iii 5, 3.

of Jerusalem and the final catastrophe,[1] thus at the very beginning throwing a different atmosphere about the whole discourse. In Mark the disciples ask only when the Temple is to be destroyed and what the sign will be when this is about to happen. In Matthew they ask also what will be the sign of Christ's advent and the end of the age. Other occasional verses and phrases introduced reveal the editor's eschatological interest. The "abomination of desolation" is made to refer apparently to the destruction of the Temple,[2] thus indicating that the fall of the city was regarded as a sign of the approaching end, and the apocalyptic idea of prophecy appears in the reference to Daniel. The appearance of the "sign of the Son of man" in the heavens and the "mourning of all the tribes of the earth" are strongly apocalyptic.[3] The editor omitted verses of Mark[4] and added from his other sources material which probably in its original context had less brilliant apocalyptic coloring.[5] Especially noteworthy is the substitution for the very brief conclusion in Mark of very considerable additions emphasizing rather inconsistently the need for watchfulness because of the suddenness and unexpectedness of the advent.[6] If the signs already mentioned serve any purpose, the elect should have sufficient warning of the end. The account of the last judgment[7] is a fitting conclusion, which, like the introductory questions of the disciples, gives an apocalyptic tone to the whole discourse and shows that the writer, and no doubt also his fellow Christians, regarded the material he had

[1] 24:3. This, perhaps, is due to the fact that the city had fallen.
[2] 24:15.
[3] 24:30; cp. Dan. 7:13 f.; Zech. 12:10 ff.; Hab. 3:10 (LXX); Rev. 18:9. See Moffatt in *Expositor's Greek Testament* on Rev. 1:7.
[4] Mk. 13:9-12, already used in Mt. 10:17-22; Mk. 13:33-37, used in part in Mt. 24:42; 25:13 f.
[5] Mt. 24:10-12, 14; 24:26-28=Lk. 17:23, 24,37.
[6] Mk. 13:33-37; Mt. 24:37-51=Lk. 17:26, 27, 34, 35; 12:42-46; Mt. 25:1-30.
[7] Mt. 25:31-46.

here collected as all bearing directly upon the end of the world. The delay of the second advent is explained in a very different fashion from Paul. The gospel must first be preached in the whole civilized world, then the end will come.[1]

It is not solely in the great discourse of chapters 24 and 25 that the gospel exhibits a thoroughly apocalyptic tone. In many places the editor makes substitutions or additions which reveal his vivid hope. For the Markan parable of the seed growing naturally according to divine law,[2] he substitutes that of the wheat and the tares, with a distinctly eschatological interpretation.[3] To offset the non-eschatological parables of the mustard seed, leaven, pearl of great price, and hidden treasure, he introduces that of the dragnet, likewise eschatologically interpreted.[4] In both he speaks of sending forth the angels, of the separation of the good from the bad, of the punishment of the latter "in the furnace of fire," and of the rewards of the former "at the end of the age." It is a thoroughly catastrophic coming that he expects. The faithful disciples of Jesus shall enjoy their compensation for present sacrifices "in the new world (Greek: "rebirth"), when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory."[5] He twice substitutes the second advent of the Son of man for less distinctive phrases.[6] We are justified, therefore, in believing that this gospel reflects a heightened expectation among the Christians in the decade just following the destruction of the Jewish capital. A punishment of the murderers of Jesus so signal and so terrible must be among the beginnings of travail that precede the rebirth of the world.

[1] Mt. 24:14.
[2] Mk. 4:26-29.
[3] Mt. 13:24-30; 36-43.
[4] Mt. 13:47-50.
[5] Mt. 19:28.
[6] Mt. 16:28 for Mk. 9:1; Mt. 19:28 for Lk. 22:30.

The Gospel of Matthew exhibits a peculiar combination of discrete elements. The use of the phrase "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God" suggests to the modern mind the realm of spirits, not an earthly messianic reign. But no such connotation was presented to the early Christian. "Heaven" was simply a reverential paraphrase for "God." Matthew, in contrast to Luke, defines the coming of the kingdom as doing God's will on earth.[1] Yet he has no idea of social and religious evolution. He is intensely nationalistic, yet distinctly universalistic; he reverences the Jewish Law, yet is bitterly anti-Pharisaic. He expects the kingdom to come in the near future, yet the believers are to go out to make disciples of all nations. No gospel so clearly reports Jesus' emphasis on the inwardness of religion and morality, yet none makes more of an external, catastrophic coming of the new age. The writer shows the qualities of a vigorous but unphilosophical mind that catches and holds many truths without relating them. Therefore he develops and makes explicit the contradiction between the prophetic and the apocalyptic point of view which the warmth of Jesus' experience and the clarity of his thinking had partially fused into unity.

III. The Domitianic Crisis

Two decades after the fall of Jerusalem, there broke over the rapidly growing Christian brotherhood a storm as terrifying as that which had visited the Jews. The cumulating grudge of the heathen public and the growing suspicion of the imperial government, incited by the peculiar moral inflexibility, social exclusiveness, and religious intolerance of the Christians, found their expression in the persecution authorized by Domitian, lasting from 93 A. D. till his death in 96. It appeared that the fires of perse-

[1] In the Lord's Prayer, Mt. 6:10=Lk. 11:2.

cution would destroy the church. The trial seemed beyond its strength. The end of the age, the appearance of Christ, and the salvation of the saints, so long promised, had not come. God seemed to have forgotten them. At this juncture a Jewish Christian, who was perfectly familiar with the apocalyptic literature of his race and fully persuaded that the woes and distresses of the time portended the speedy realization of the Christian hope, wrote the Book of Revelation, the New Testament apocalypse *par excellence,* clothing his faith in the rugged pictorial language of mythology and apocalypticism.

In spite of all its bewildering wealth of imagery, it will be perfectly clear to any one who reads the Jewish apocalypses and the Christian apocalypse together that we have here a thoroughgoing attempt to adapt the whole apocalyptic scheme, including both form and content, to Christian uses. The writer believes himself to be living in the last times. Though the Christian church is undergoing terrible persecution and sufferings, there is still worse ahead, and he writes to picture to his fellow believers the glorious deliverance that shall come when the climax is reached and Christ returns to set up on earth his thousand-year reign. Thereafter, for a brief period, the powers of evil will again be unloosed, but after the final triumph of the Christ the new heavens and new earth will appear, and the eternal reign of God will be inaugurated. It is a thoroughly Jewish piece of work. Every detail of it can be matched in heathen mythology or Jewish apocalyptic, except that the messiah is "Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead . . . who loves us, and has loosed us from our sins by shedding his blood—he has made us a realm of priests for his God and Father,"[1] and the members of the kingdom are the new Israel, the Christian church, "the people who have come out of the great Distress, who washed their

[1] Rev. 1:5.

robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."[1]

The Book of Revelation makes a distinct contribution to the definition of eschatology. There are numerous details which may always be obscure to us because we are not familiar with their antecedents. In a number of points, however, his conceptions of eschatological doctrine are clear. The Roman Empire is no longer the beneficent power which restrains the forces of evil while the gospel is being preached. On the contrary, personified in Nero, it is the Antichrist, who, like Christ, is to have a second advent. Thus culminates the change of Christian political sentiment, which, no doubt, began with Paul's death and the Neronic persecution. Four contradictory elements in Jewish eschatology, the reign of the messiah and the reign of God, the earthly kingdom and the heavenly, spiritual state, are reconciled by introducing the millennium, with a bodily resurrection and a reign of the glorified Christ, to precede the eternal reign of God in a new, spiritual heaven and earth. This double scheme made it possible to use Ezekiel's idea of the final assault of all the nations led by Gog[2] and their complete overthrow. It makes it necessary for him to introduce two judgments and two resurrections also.[3] But by these various means he has succeeded in superficially reconciling many of the contradictory views of Jewish eschatology. That has nothing to do with the very real service he has rendered the world in putting into most vivid pictures the unalterable faith of the Christian church that God will care for his own, that wickedness will be suitably punished, that Christ will eventually triumph, and that the spiritual powers of the universe, the forces for good, will come to their own in a world where God is recognized as supreme.

[1] Rev. 7:14.

[2] He misreads Gog of the land of Magog into two entities, Gog and Magog; cp. Ez. 38-39 and Rev. 20:7-10.

[3] Rev. 20:4, 11, 5, 12.

IV. The Second Generation

In the Book of Revelation the apocalyptic *motif* in the New Testament culminates in a grand final fanfare. It is entirely possible that its writer was John the son of Zebedee, and consequently that in this book we have in fact as in spirit pure Jewish Christianity of the first generation, trying still to express its marvelous faith in the cramped categories of Jewish eschatology. In the remaining books of the New Testament which accept the apocalyptic program, it is no longer a living hope, but only a doctrine, useful for hortatory purposes, but in no case entering deeply into men's souls and really stirring their imaginations and their faith. The promise had been too often reiterated, and too often had the expected deliverance been postponed. There were, no doubt, many whose thoughts are represented in the ancient word, coming perhaps from the Jewish Apocalypse of Eldad and Modad, and quoted by Clement of Rome in his letter to the Corinthians:

> "Wretched are the double-minded, which doubt in their souls and say, These things we did hear in the days of our fathers also, and behold we have grown old, and none of these things hath befallen us. Ye fools, compare yourselves unto a tree; take a vine. First it sheddeth its leaves, then a shoot cometh, then a leaf, then a flower, and after these a sour berry, then a full ripe grape."

Clement adds,

> "Ye see that in a little time the fruit of the tree attaineth unto mellowness. Of a truth quickly and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, the Scripture also bearing witness to it, saying: He shall come quickly and shall not tarry; and the Lord shall come suddenly into His temple, even the Holy One, whom ye expect."[1]

[1] I Clem. 23:3-5; cp. II Clem. 11.2-4; translation from Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Harmer (London, 1907), pp. 67 f.

Though Clement may condemn those who reject the Christian hope, he does not again refer to it, and goes on in the chapter cited only to argue in a very mild and academic fashion for faith in the resurrection. In fact, there is nothing apocalyptic about the whole lengthy letter except these two quotations and one is justified in doubting whether the writer meant them in the original sense. When he wrote, shortly before the Domitianic persecution, and again when that trial had passed, the majority of Christians either dismissed the thought of the second coming as a doctrine to be accepted without criticism, or definitely opposed it.

Under the circumstances just sketched, we are not surprised that the motto of the second generation of Christian believers, those who had survived the death of Peter, Paul, and the other original leaders, and the fall of Jerusalem, and had not yet faced the Domitianic persecution, seems to have been "Yet a little while." We find the phrase in I Peter.[1] It receives unusual emphasis in Hebrews, written probably in Alexandria shortly before Clement's letter just quoted.[2] The epistle was written by one who is certain that tremendous changes are impending, but those whom he addressed were in danger of falling away from the faith through hope too long deferred.[3] Therefore he exhorts his readers,

> "Let us hold the hope we avow without wavering (for we can rely on him who gave us the Promise); let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds—not ceasing to meet together, as is the habit of some, but admonishing one another, all the more so, as you see the Day is coming near."[4]
>
> "Now do not drop that confidence of yours; it carries with it a rich hope of reward. Steady patience is what you need, so that after doing the will of God you

[1] 5:10, "a little while."
[2] See Moffatt, *Introduction*, pp. 451 ff.
[3] 3:12-14.
[4] 10:23 f.

may get what you have been promised. For in a little, a very little now,

> The Coming One will arrive without delay.
> Meantime my just man shall live on by his faith;
> if he shrinks back, my soul takes no delight in him."[1]

"Then (at Sinai) his voice shook the earth, but now the assurance is, once again I will make Heaven as well as earth to quake. That phrase, once again, denotes the removal of what is shaken (as no more than created), to leave only what stands unshaken. Therefore let us render thanks that we get an unshaken realm; and in this way let us worship God acceptably—but with godly fear and awe, for our God is indeed a consuming fire."[2]

But he not only threatens with judgment. Christ is "the high-priest of the bliss that is to be."[3]

"Once for all, at the end of the world, he has appeared with his self-sacrifice to abolish sin . . . and will appear again, not to deal with sin, but for the saving of those who look out for him."[4]

"There is a Sabbath-Rest, then, reserved still for the People of God,"[5] an "unshaken realm," which shall be theirs after the present transitory earth has been done away.

The same attempt to keep alive a faith that struggled with disappointment meets us in the diatribe that is commonly called the Epistle of James, another product of *fin de siécle* Christianity. The writer is much more concerned with the present ethical problems of his people than with the coming judgment. He has no doubt that the righteous will be rewarded with the crown of life.[6]

[1] 10:35-38.
[2] 12:26-29, quoting Hag. 2:6; Dt. 4:24; 9:3; Is. 33:14.
[3] 9:11.
[4] 9:26 ff.
[5] 4:9.
[6] 1:12.

The apocalyptic class-consciousness is much in evidence,[1] and the woes pronounced upon the rich are in the best style of the prophetic denunciations.[2] But the writer does not betray any vivid expectation of the end in the near future. Even the exhortation against presumptuous planning for the morrow is not based on the imminence of the second advent, but the shortness of life.[3] The coming of the Lord is "at hand," yet one must not be unduly expectant.

> "Be patient, then, brothers, till the arrival of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious crop of the land, biding his time patiently till he gets the autumn and the spring rains;[4] have patience yourselves, strengthen your hearts, for the arrival of the Lord is at hand. Do not murmur against one another, brothers, lest you are judged; look, the Judge is standing at the very door!"[5]

Such an exhortation emphasizes the want of earnest expectation.

If the so-called pastoral epistles, I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus, are really Paul's,[6] they show a complete change in his attitude. None of his hopefulness and ardent expectation appear. The times are evil and destined to become worse—a recrudescence of apocalyptic pessimism.[7] Sometime Christ Jesus "will judge the living and the dead." His appearance and his reign are to be feared.[8] The righteous will be rewarded, the faithless punished.

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[1] 2:1-8.

[2] 5:1-6.

[3] 4:13-16.

[4] Cp. I Clem. 23:4, quoted above p. 185.

[5] 5:7-9.

[6] See Moffatt, *Introduction*, pp. 395-420, Peake, *Critical Introduction to the NT* (*New York*, 1912), pp. 60-71.

[7] I Ti. 4:1; II Ti. 3:1-3; 4:3. See above, p. 125.

[8] II Ti. 4:1.

> "If we have died with him, we shall live with him;
> if we endure, then we shall reign with him;
> if we disown him, then he shall disown us."[1]

Meantime they must be zealous of good works, "awaiting the blessed hope of the appearance of the Glory of the great God and of our Savior Christ Jesus,"[2] "which will be brought about in due time."[3] One of the strongest arguments against the authenticity of these letters in their present form is the inconsistency of their apocalyptic views and attitude with that of the other letters ascribed to Paul. They probably represent the spirit of Christianity near the end of the first century.

Jude and its much later expansion, Second Peter, exhibit the character of Christian apocalyptic in the second century.[4] Jude has directly quoted the Testament of Moses and the Apocalypse of Enoch.[5] He quotes also the pessimistic reference of I Ti. 4:1 to the last times.[6] But there is no expectation of an immediate end of all things. Second Peter goes even farther in detailing his doctrine of the end.

> "You know that mockers will come with their mockeries in the last days, men who go by their own passions, asking, Where is His promised advent? Since the day our fathers fell asleep, things remain exactly as they were from the beginning of creation."[7]

Such may be sure that, as once the world was destroyed by a deluge, so again it will be by fire.

> "Beloved, you must not ignore this one fact, that with the Lord a single day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a single day. The Lord is

[1] II Ti. 2:11 f.
[2] Ti. 2:13.
[3] I Ti. 6:15.
[4] Jude probably dates early in the century, II Peter very much later; see Moffatt, *Introduction*, pp. 355 ff., 367 ff.
[5] Jude 6, 14, 15=I En. 12:4; 60:8; 1:9; on Jude 9 see Assumption of Moses in Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II 412.
[6] Jude 18.
[7] 3:3, 4.

> not slow with what he promises, according to certain people's idea of slowness; no, he is long suffering for your sake, he does not wish any to perish but all to betake themselves to repentance. The day of the Lord will come like a thief, when the heavens will vanish with crackling roar, the stars will be set ablaze and melt, the earth and all its works will disappear. Now as all things are thus to be dissolved, what holy and pious men ought you to be in your behavior, you who expect and hasten the advent of the Day of God, which dissolves the heavens in fire and makes the stars blaze and melt! It is new heavens and a new earth that we expect, as He promised, and in them dwells righteousness."[1]

Thus will come the "eternal realm of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ."[2]

Here is a very definite doctrine of the end of the world (following the Stoic theory of a final conflagration), of the judgment of the wicked, and of the reward of the righteous in a transformed universe, but, be it noted, no emphasis on Christ's relationship to it all. In this, as in his academic argument, the writer of Second Peter shows how far he is from the vivid hope of Paul and his contemporaries of the first generation.

Several of the early Christian writings which just failed to get into the New Testament canon, such as especially Hermas, throw light on the apocalyptic faith of the Christians of the early second century.[3] We shall take space for but one of them, the so-called "Didache," or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," one of the earliest manuals of Christian doctrine and ritual. It concludes with a "little apocalypse" that in conciseness rivals that of Mark. I quote it entire.

> "For in the last days the false prophets and corrupters shall be multiplied, and the sheep shall be turned into

[1] 3:8-13.
[2] 1:11.
[3] See Case, *The Millenial Hope* (Chicago, 1918), pp. 156 ff., for a brief survey.

> wolves, and love shall be turned into hate. For as lawlessness increaseth, they shall hate one another and shall persecute and betray. And then the world-deceiver shall appear as a son of God; and shall work signs and wonders, and the earth shall be delivered into his hands; and he shall do unholy things, which have never been since the world began. Then all created mankind shall come to the fire of testing, and many shall be offended and perish; but they that endure in their faith shall be saved by the Curse Himself. And then shall the signs of the truth appear; first a sign of a rift in the heaven, then a sign of a voice of a trumpet, and thirdly a resurrection of the dead; yet not of all, but as it was said: The Lord shall come and all His saints with Him. Then shall the world see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven."[1]

Here we have the increase of wickedness, the Antichrist, certain last signs, and finally the second coming. Evidently the doctrine is firmly fixed in Christian theology, but it does not play an active part in the writer's thinking, as the remainder of the little book shows. This book may be taken as typical of the attitude of a large part of the church from the second generation down to modern times. In the two subsequent chapters we turn to the later developments of Christian thinking on the subject.

[1] 16:3-8, Lightfoot's translation, *The Apostolic Fathers,* ed. by J. R. Harmer (London, 1907), p. 235.

CHAPTER VIII

THREE MILLENNIUMS OF WAITING

I. The Millennium of Biblical History

FOR three thousand years men have been waiting for the millennium. The development of apocalyptic thinking during the first thousand years, the millennium of biblical history, has been sketched in the previous chapters. Since before the time of the prophets, nine hundred or a thousand years prior to Jesus' birth, the Hebrew ancestors of the Christian faith had looked for the appearance of God as their savior. We have followed the development of this hope down to the second century of the Christian era. We have discovered at the beginning a popular preprophetic faith based upon current mythology and nationalistic theology. The earlier prophets tried to reinterpret the popular idea of the day of Yahweh and transform it from a selfish patriotic hope into a vital motive for social ethics and spiritual religion. The postexilic prophets and apocalyptists, while maintaining the ethical note and in some regards extending the spiritual implications of what now came to be called the judgment, or the consummation of the age, nevertheless to some extent lost the vital social and historical content of the prophetic conception and returned to the standpoint of preprophetic popular religion. They developed also definite schemes or programs of the events of the future and a peculiar type of literature marked by characteristic forms and figures of speech.

New Testament eschatology developed out of this Jew-

ish apocalypticism. Three points must be remembered regarding the relation of New Testament religion to this problem. First, Christianity was much more than an apocalyptic movement. Its founder Jesus, and its protagonist Paul re-established the social ideals of the prophets in the forefront of religious thought, and though they consciously attempted no synthesis of social ethics and apocalyptic enthusiasm, yet Christian confidence that in some sense the new age was already here or was dawning led to the incorporation into practical life of the highest ideals of human brotherhood and divine indwelling. Thus Christianity consciously and explicitly revived the best elements of social and spiritual religion as the prophets had proclaimed it. But this it did because it was a revolt against Pharisaic orthodoxy. Therefore, Christianity was, in the second place, thoroughly heterodox and enthusiastic, the true child of Jewish apocalypticism, completely imbued with faith in a speedy turn of affairs which should usher in a new age. Its hopes were not political, as with many Jews; in this it resembled Pharisaism. The language which Jesus himself used, according to the earliest records in the three gospels, was understood by nearly all to mean that he expected soon to return in supernatural power to judge all men, and to inaugurate a reign of righteousness.

In the third place, our survey demonstrates that the doctrine of the last things in the New Testament is anything but uniform or even consistent. Not to mention the books which are non-apocalyptic, to which we shall turn in the next chapter, we have found a surprising variety of views and a still greater diversity of interest and enthusiasm. In the earliest Palestinian Christianity and in Paul, in fact in all the Christians of the first generation, we find the liveliest hopes of the speedy return of Christ in power and glory to inaugurate the new age, the reign of God. This expectation is greatly enhanced about the time of the Jewish war and the fall of Jerusalem.

It begins to ebb again in the two decades that follow, but blazes up once more at the time of the Domitianic persecution, this time in the full paraphernalia of Jewish apocalyptic, with a wealth of imagination and a systematic inclusiveness not hitherto met in Christian circles. Thereafter it ceases to be a living hope, at least in the minds of most Christians, and, except as again and again circumstances similar to those which gave it birth call it back to life, it becomes a dead doctrine, a part of the faith once delivered to the saints.

The New Testament Apocalypse exercised a decisive influence on subsequent Christian thinking. In the New Testament, aside from the Revelation, there is unlimited apocalyptic enthusiasm but no millennarianism. There is the vivid expectation of the return of Christ to reign, but there is no distinction between his rule and the kingdom of God, which, according to the gospels, he came to found. Wherever the Book of Revelation was accepted, its more systematic eschatology became church doctrine, unless it was interpreted allegorically, as it was by the great Alexandrian divines, and eventually by Augustine. Where it was rejected, there was usually no millenarianism, or chiliasm, and usually no emphasis upon Christ's return. In the East, the Montanists in the second century made the doctrine one of the cardinal points of their return to the primitive faith, while, by way of reaction against their unbridled enthusiasm, the greater part of the eastern church long refused the Revelation a place in the canon.[1]

II. The Millenarian System

There is no space here to follow the development of eschatological thinking down to the modern millenarian systems. In general one may say that the doctrines of the second coming and the millennium have run like

[1] See Case, *The Millennial Hope*, pp. 156-184.

underground streams through all the history of Christianity. When occasion arose, especially during persecutions and unusual political disturbances, great famines or pestilences or catastrophes in nature, they would come to the surface and for a time become a mighty river. When the circumstances that called them forth changed, the people, disappointed in their hopes, abandoned the doctrines as errors, until a new generation arose that had forgotten. So it was just before the year one thousand, in this case partly because of unsettled conditions, partly because of Augustine's doctrine that the millennium had begun with Jesus' advent and would last a thousand years, when the second advent and the judgment would come. We see other flood-tides of apocalypticism in the Apostolic Brethren and the Spirituals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the Taborites of the fifteenth, in the Zwickau Prophets and the Anabaptists of the Reformation, the Fifth Monarchy Men and some of the Quakers of the seventeenth century in England, a little later the Camisards and the "French Prophets," the Darbyites, the Irvingites, the Millerites, and the Mormons of the early nineteenth century, the French Catholic prophetism of the time of the Franco-Prussian War, and the great interest which the subject has excited since the recent war began.

Ever since the Reformation a special inciting cause has been at work, the study and literal interpretation of the Bible. The greater the emphasis laid on the written word as the authoritative norm of Christian belief because the verbally inspired message of God to man, the stronger the tendency to accept the program of the Book of Revelation with sundry supplements from Daniel and other apocalyptic sections of the Bible. This is perhaps the main cause of the interest taken by the German pietists, the Shakers, the modern Adventists, beginning with William Miller, and the Premillennialists of today in England and America.

In the apocalyptic program, both Jewish and Christian, there are certain matters on which there has been wide disagreement. Is there to be a millennial reign of God on earth, and, if so, on what sort of an earth, the present earth, or one transformed and regenerated? How is the new age to be brought in, by human or divine agency? What part is the messiah to play, and is he the son of David, the son of Levi, or a supernatural being? These are questions which the Jewish apocalyptists answered variously according to their historical surroundings and their spiritual outlook. Only the question regarding the messiah received a definite answer in Christian dogma. As to the resurrection, heaven, hell and future punishment, an intermediate state, the part of angels, devils, Satan, and Antichrist in the final drama, there was great uncertainty in all quarters. Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, and Greek mythology and superstition, working in part indirectly through Judaism and in part directly through converts, are responsible for many details of Christian belief on these points. As Christian theologians have gone to work on the confused eschatological doctrines of the Old and New Testaments, there has necessarily resulted an even greater diversity of views in modern than in ancient times.

On certain questions, however, the apocalyptic faith has never been in doubt. The world is growing worse, and the end of the age, or of the world, is to be preceded by a falling away into heretofore unparalleled sinfulness, by woeful catastrophes, and by terrifying portents which will indubitably indicate the coming of the crisis. When wickedness has reached a frightfulness which the divine long-suffering cannot endure, God will interpose to judge and punish the wicked and to reward the righteous, who shall enjoy unbounded felicity under a new régime which will be just the opposite of the present world order. Successive generations of apocalyptists have read in the evils of their own times the signs of the end and have tried

to console themselves and their fellow believers with the assurance that now the time is ripe; that God must immediately intervene and, by the destruction of all evil, usher in the promised new age in which dwelleth righteousness.

In the Christian church the Adventist sects and the Premillennialists within the so-called orthodox denominations, while differing greatly on points of detail, generally add to the apocalyptic scheme a gathering, or restoration, of the Jews, the physical return of Christ from heaven, a more or less physically and materially understood resurrection, and a more or less grossly conceived millennium on earth. They all agree that the gospel must be preached in the whole world, but that only a few will be saved, and human society will but grow worse and worse until the end of this present dispensation.

III. Objections to Premillennialism

One would not for a moment claim that the origin of an idea surely determines its value. But the origin and history of this doctrine plainly brand it as false and misleading. It arose largely from heathen mythology. It was the faith of Jewish nationalism in the time of the prophets. They tried to reform it, but it remained the stronghold of those who in the Bible are called false prophets. Revived by Ezekiel and gradually purified by him and his successors, its extravagant promises and false ideals caused the rejection of Jesus and his message and were at the bottom of the great Jewish revolts of A. D. 70 and 135. Taken over substantially unchanged into Christianity as one of its foundation stones, it eventually became a millstone about the neck of the church that would have drowned the new movement, if other doctrines and interpretations had not counterbalanced its influence.

The premillennialist faces other difficulties. Not the least of them is that history, of which he makes so much,

has repeatedly falsified, not merely his particular predictions, but his whole conception of God and the world. As we have seen, the preprophetic Hebrew who longed for the day of the Lord was mistaken. As the prophets warned him, his hopes were all vain; God did not intervene as he expected to restore the glories of the Jewish kingdom. All through Jewish history, from Ezekiel through Zachariah, Haggai, and all the non-canonical Jewish apocalypses to the time of Bar-Cochba, the promise of God's miraculous intervention was again and again held out to encourage the people, but their hopes were never realized. The early Christians looked for the speedy appearing of their Master on the clouds of heaven to put an end to their sufferings and persecutions.

> "For in a little, a very little now,
> The Coming One will arrive without delay."[1]

And the premillennialist asks us to believe that the "little while" may be stretched to eighteen hundred years, or twenty-four hundred, if we take the date of Habbukuk, who first penned the words. He still insists that now at last the end is near, just as all his forbears have always declared. An apocalyptic writer who did not believe that the end was near is inconceivable. All these centuries the world has been growing worse, or rather it has always been just on the verge of reaching the extreme point of sinfulness. A doctrine that thus repeatedly has been discredited must be revised, not by the simple expedient of changing the date a few years, but by some thoroughgoing alteration in its principles.

The fundamental difficulty with premillennial views is that they depend upon the dogma of verbal inspiration and the accompanying method of literal interpretation. Any scheme of literal interpretation must of course entirely ignore all that is inconsistent with it. It must also treat all parts of the Bible as equal. Daniel and Revelation

[1] Heb. 10:37; Hab. 2:3.

are put on a par with Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel. The ethical and spiritual progress made by Judaism and Christianity is ignored, and we are asked to live by a doctrine the main elements of which were borrowed from heathen mythology. Jesus is to be supplemented and interpreted by Revelation instead of the opposite.

Premillennialism involves an external and literalistic interpretation of prophecy. Every prediction must come to pass exactly as written. Some have already been fulfilled in part, all must be in the course of time, if the Scripture is the word of God. Thus prophecy is made a matter of prediction, not of teaching the truth; a foretelling, not a forth-telling; and the prime value of the great prophets as God's messengers of righteousness is obscured. Instead of a mine of truth, the Bible becomes a quarry from which to hew prognostications of a shape and size to fit the current theory of the future. One need not stop to point out the moral and spiritual loss of such a conception of the Word.

The philosophical basis of such a belief is the ancient dualism which represents matter as essentially evil. Salvation from evil and sin can come, therefore, only by the destruction or complete transformation of the material world.[1] The doctrines of the catastrophic end of the present world order and the visible return of Christ reveal a most naïve, unphilosophical view of the universe and the soul, and an utterly materialistic and mechanical conception of morals and religion. When one objects to such doctrines, one is held to deny the power of God. One might answer that their proponents deny the good sense of God. Why should he make a world that demanded such a procedure? Can one possibly believe that he has done so? Rather, does not all we see in the universe tend to establish a faith far higher than that of the

[1] Windelband, *History of Philosophy* (translated by Tufts, New York, 1914), pp. 230 f.

ancient apocalyptist with his crude notions of a Ptolemaic universe?

Premillennialism transfers the weight of interest from this world to the next. Attention is focused on saving one's soul from this present evil age and keeping it unspotted until the new age appears. The nerve of active Christian endeavor is in danger of being slowly paralyzed. Fortunately many Premillennialists, especially within the so-called orthodox churches, are not consistent, and, despite their views on this subject, are so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of their Master that they cannot refrain from social and missionary endeavor. But that is not true of some Adventist groups, the majority of whom are proselyters rather than missionaries or evangelists. If the world is steadily growing worse and this present social order is soon to be destroyed, while, as many Adventists teach, God will give all men a chance in the new age, why should one wear out his life trying to preach to indifferent hearers? Such a doctrine of God and the world will in most cases smother the activity that might be aroused by the saying, "This gospel of the Reign shall be preached all over the wide world as a testimony to all the Gentiles, and then the end will come."[1] Thus scientifically, philosophically, historically, spiritually, and practically Premillennialism is discredited.

IV. Other Theories

Formally Premillennialism finds its antithesis in Postmillennialism. Practically it does not always work out so, for the latter term may be used to cover as great a variety of beliefs as the former. In itself the term signifies only the belief that the second advent is to come after, not before, the millennium. Such a faith involves

[1] Mt. 24:14. The real character of Adventism is revealed by the paltry conception of evangelization held by many of its followers.

an entirely different world view from that of the Premillennialist, for it implies that the forces now at work in the world, spiritual or natural, as you please—for the Christian the terms are synonymous—are to bring in the reign of God, and that the appearance of Jesus Christ in glory will be the climax of the gradual growth of the kingdom of God. Such a view we will in a few moments expound more fully, and the term Postmillennialism might be used to cover what I believe to be the true view, were it not for the fact that it has too often been used to include a faith in the visible, physical return of Christ at the end of the millennium and a "spectacular" judgment on the lines of the parable of the sheep and the goats literally interpreted, a faith that is utterly at variance with science and spiritual religion.

For many Christians one hindrance to a proper interpretation and appreciation of apocalyptic is this belief in a bodily resurrection and a "spectacular" judgment, a view held by Premillennialists and many Postmillennialists. A study of the origin of the idea of the bodily resurrection, which we cannot here enter upon, would prove helpful.[1] It must suffice to call attention to the absurdity of supposing that Jesus' physical body went to a heaven somewhere above the clouds. Which way was Mount Olivet pointing at that particular moment? God is a spirit; Jesus and all other beings in his presence must also be spirits. We can believe that spirit can recognize and communicate with spirit. In a sense we can see him with the eyes of the spirit now; some day with clearer vision we shall see, no longer in a glass darkened by fleshly limitations, but face to face. The idea that the ascended Christ must assume physical form to rule as God's vicegerent on earth is merely a relic of the old Jewish materialistic hope of a Davidic kingdom re-established on earth. As spirit he went to heaven. As spirit he will

[1] See above, pp. 128 ff.

return. That this earth will sometime no longer support human life is one of the prognostications of science, as well as of mythologies innumerable and of the Bible. Whether that end will come by heat or cold no one can say. But for spiritual religion that far-off event can have no connection with a calling of disembodied spirits back into physical bodies and the summoning of the quick and the dead before a throne set up somewhere in the physical universe. Judgment is inevitable, but the literal, spectacular sort must be relegated to the limbo of superstitions along with the hell of fire and brimstone.

Disgusted with the vagaries of Premillennialism and all literalistic views, many Christians have cut the Gordian knot by denying the eschatological teachings of the New Testament any historical, social, or cosmic significance. The reiterated exhortation to be ready, for we know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh, all that one reads regarding watchfulness, is supposed to apply only to the death of the individual. Any one who has heard "revival" preaching is familiar with the use of these texts in sermons that consist mainly of anecdotes of sudden death. A recent scholarly writer, Wilhelm Bousset, one of the foremost German students in the realm of ideas, seems to find in Jesus' preaching of the coming kingdom nothing of present value except the promise of an existence with God in the "unknown Whither" to which all of us must soon pass.[1] Not but that this is a legitimate and most solemnizing thought. But what a paltry use to make of a doctrine that is absolutely universal in its implications! The wider relationships of the problem revealed to us by anthropology, comparative mythology, and the study of social movements demand a more careful evaluation of the doctrine. Three millenniums of waiting cannot be thus summarily dismissed.

[1] In his *Jesus* (Eng. trans. New York, 1906), pp. 97 f.

CHAPTER IX

THE SECOND ADVENT

I. The Modern Christian's Dilemma

"NO belief of Christianity filled so large a share in the horizon of the early Christians as that in the Second Advent," says one of the foremost of English classical scholars.[1] Practically every well known student of the New Testament would agree with him. It is difficult for us in this age to conceive the power and vividness of this early Christian hope. It colored the thinking of the first disciples, as the idea of evolution does that of the modern scientist, or the hope of social amelioration that of the modern socialist or Bolshevik. As we have seen, with one notable exception, every writer in the New Testament seems fully to expect that Jesus will return on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Large sections of the earliest gospels dwell on the thought. Paul refers to it in practically every letter. Later writers are almost impatient in urging patience upon those who are beginning to be weary of waiting. One of the watchwords of the Christian brotherhood consisted of the Aramaic words, *Marana tha,* "O Lord, come!"[2] The Book of Revelation closes with the words, "He who bears this testimony says, 'Even so: I am coming very soon.' Amen, Lord Jesus, come!" How incongruous it seems that this fundamental doctrine of the first Christians, though nom-

[1] Percy Gardner, *Exploratio Evangelica,* 2nd ed. (London, 1907), p. 277.

[2] I Co. 16:22; Didache 10:6.

inally accepted, is practically neglected by the greater portion of modern believers and "would be scarcely missed if it were removed from the scheme of Christian belief!"[1]

The whims and freaks of ancient apocalypticism and modern adventism during three thousand years of waiting have driven the great majority of Christians into complete indifference to the whole subject. A vast number of clergymen and laymen say, when it is mentioned, that it has never interested them. They pass over the references of Jesus and Paul or explain them away by some of the half-way methods we have mentioned in the previous chapter. They find the Revelation so difficult and uncongenial that they have given up trying to understand it. A few of the striking and inspiring phrases and pictures of the Christian Apocalypse, dislocated from the context, their doctrinal implications forgotten, are an indispensable part of Christian thinking and feeling. What would the preacher do without the "great multitude, which no man can number," "the great white throne," "the holy city, the new Jerusalem," "the river of the water of life," and "the tree of life"? What would Christian song be without its "Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"? Even these expressions are coming to be less and less used because they have less and less real meaning. For that large number who accept the main tenets of apocalypticism in some indefinite fashion it has no vital, practical value. The Adventist who makes this fundamental doctrine of primitive Christianity a powerful motive in living may come much nearer the mind of his Master than many a modern believer who disdains the unintelligence and one-sidedness that so often marks apocalypticism.

To one with a consistent view of the universe and human history such as a thorough common school educa-

[1] Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

tion and sound common sense give, the premillennial conception of the future is absurd. As a friend remarked to me, "The premillennial question has no interest for one with the modern point of view." It is outside the world of his thinking. Are we, then, simply to discard the doctrine of the second advent as we do that of a flat earth with a hemispherical "firmament" above it? Are all the hopes that have been distilled into the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," to be fulfilled only in heaven and never on earth? Are we just to "muddle along" as best we can century after century and millennium after millennium, pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps?

Can we be Christians and dismiss as an unimportant fantasy, or perhaps a rather troublesome overemphasis of fanaticism and scholarly erudition, a belief that was the very center of Jesus' thinking and which alone gave point to his death and a foundation for the primitive church? That it did play so important a role, which we have sufficiently proved, must lead us to pause and consider its intrinsic value for us. If it were found to have none, loyalty to the intellectual and religious sincerity of Jesus would compel us to regard pious allegorical and figurative rehabilitations as we would an Egyptian mummy dressed in cap and gown. We cannot continue to maintain a doctrine because it was once useful, as we do the buttons on our sleeves. But if we must discard this one, we shall be perilously near discarding Jesus. What can we do with this troublesome but insistent doctrine?

It is to be expected that, after so many disappointments, there should be many like the double-minded of Clement's letter to say, "These things we did hear in the days of our fathers also, and behold we have grown old, and none of these things hath happened,"[1] or like the scoffers of Second Peter's time to say, "Where is His promised advent? Since the day our fathers fell asleep, things remain

[1] See above, p. 185.

exactly as they were from the beginning of creation."[1] Not "mockers . . . who go by their own passions," but sincere, earnest followers of the Master from that day to this have been asking the question. Often with breaking hearts they have prayed the prayer, "Amen, Lord Jesus, come!" And we today, after years of devastating war, as winters of famine and summers of pestilence fall on central Europe and western Asia, as social unrest and industrial disturbances multiply, we, too, just as earnestly and seriously, are asking the question, "What does his promised coming mean to us in the twentieth century?"

The answer to this question is of interest not merely because it played so large a part in the faith of primitive Christianity and in the teaching of Jesus himself. Nor is it of importance merely because so many earnest and sincere Christians have been misled by its extravagances and made barren and unfruitful. It has a much wider significance. Our question is the Christian formulation of a longing that seems as old and as widespread as the human race. Those primitive myths of world cycles ending with an all-embracing cataclysm and the return of the Golden Age indicate how deeply seated in the human heart is the hope that evil shall be eventually punished and destroyed and man live in purity and happiness.[2] The restless, untiring efforts of man to subdue the earth and make it a fitter place in which to live, social complaints, ideals, and endeavors, from Ipuwer and the Eloquent Peasant of Egypt nearly two thousand years before Christ,[3] through communism, socialism, and the labor movement to the I. W. W. and Bolsheviki, all testify that man must strive forward to something better. Has Jesus any offer of real help? Does his coming promise

[1] II Pt. 3:4.

[2] See *ERE*, art. "Eschatology."

[3] See Breasted, *Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 199-256; cp. above, pp. 7 f.

any fulfilment of all these hopes and aspirations? If it does, this doctrine will call forth a response from one of the most deep-seated and powerful of human instincts. What does "the promise of his coming" mean to the human race?

The fundamental strength of the premillennial position is twofold: it promises a better world without effort on man's part, and superficially and historically it seems to be the position of Jesus. Postmillennialism is too academic to satisfy the wistful longings of the human heart and it cannot meet the premillennial argument from Scripture, for it is equally superficial. Indifference, allegorical interpretation, indeed, every method that has been used to avoid the premillennial conclusion fails on the one side or the other. Social Christianity promises a better world, but it seems to neglect the Bible, for a great number of biblical writers were apocalyptists, and the lurid colors of their faith tinge the more delicate, spiritual tints of the others. Any one who accepts the Bible in its apparent "plain meaning" as his final authority is quite certain to be either a Premillennialist or an Adventist. Since, now, both these theories are absolutely discredited by the facts of history and science, the only alternative would seem to be to discard the Bible. Fortunately there is "a more excellent way." The Bible itself gives us the outlines of a very clear interpretation of another kind, an interpretation that takes account of the fundamental truths of the apocalyptic view and also the modern view of God and the world.

II. A Social-Spiritual Interpretation

From the records it seems clear that Jesus used the language and ideas of apocalypticism. But he was too broad and well balanced in his thinking to be exclusively dominated by any one idea. From the prophetic literature and social experience of his race and from his own com-

munion with the Father he had imbibed certain conceptions of human and superhuman relationships that were universal in their applications and, therefore, far transcended in permanent value the form, at least, of the apocalyptic doctrine. Jesus' social teachings, interpreted not as moral rules of thumb but as ethical principles, have proved themselves the final word of practical efficiency in solving social problems wherever they have been tried. Jesus' conceptions of the fatherhood of God, the value of sacrificial service, and the inwardness of religion are the only solvents of ecclesiasticism and formalism in worship, of interclass and international suspicions and jealousies, and of all the miseries and perplexities of the human heart, and they provide a sufficient method and dynamic for realizing Christian social-ethical ideals. Was Jesus conscious that these ideas were fundamentally inconsistent with the apocalypticism he had inherited from his Jewish environment? That we cannot say. Consistency of language and thinking is the mark of small souls. At any rate, we must seek an interpretation of the ultimate meaning of his apocalypticism in the light of his social and spiritual outlook, and this positively forbids our making his conception of the coming kingdom any less social or less spiritual than his own life and teachings. We find that social and spiritual interpretation in the Fourth Gospel, in Paul, and in Luke.

Toward the end of the second generation of Christians, that is, near the beginning of the second century, the "Beloved Disciple" came to a mature realization of many truths which had been hidden from his fellow believers. In the Fourth Gospel we reach the highest point in the New Testament, an interpretation of the inner meaning of Jesus' person and teaching that rises sun-crowned above all the lesser peaks of New Testament literature.[1]

[1] I am not here referring to its historical, but its religious value. Who the "Beloved Disciple" was does not matter for our present purpose.

". . . Much that at the first, in deed and word,
Lay simply and sufficiently exposed,
Had grown (or else my soul was grown to match,
Fed through such years, familiar with such light,
Guarded and guided still to see and speak)
Of new significance and fresh result;
What first were guessed as points, I now knew stars,
And named them in the Gospel I have writ.
For men said, 'It is getting long ago:
Where is the promise of his coming?'—asked
These young ones in their strength, as loth to wait,
Of me who, when their sires were born, was old.
I, for I loved them, answered, joyfully."

The quality of this Johannine answer is thrown into brilliant relief by contrast with that of II Peter. The latter knows no honest doubters, only mockers, and he answers by threatening them with the mythological dogma of a world conflagration. The Johannine answer comes from a heart that has been in communion with the spirit of God. It does not threaten punishment, but promises power. It is a joyful answer, to be apprehended by the faith that overcomes the world.

Few chapters in the New Testament have caused the Christian heart more difficulties than the thirteenth of Mark and the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of Matthew. If you will turn to the Gospel of John you will find that to all intents and purposes the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters take the place in the gospel outline of these troublesome chapters—and probably no part of the New Testament has brought more comfort to the Christian heart than these three chapters of the Fourth Gospel.[1] It is admitted, I believe, by scholars of every "tendency," that the Fourth Gospel was written to correct certain misunderstandings and to supplement certain lacks in the other three. It

[1] On the Johannine interpretation of apocalypticism see E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel, its Purpose and Theology* (Edinburgh, 1906), pp. 295-319; Case, *The Millennial Hope*, pp. 136-141.

> ". . . patient stated much of the Lord's life
> Forgotten or misdelivered, and let it work."

When once John 14, 15 and 16 are read in place of Mark 13, a flood of light is thrown on the difficulties we have been studying. The very phrase quoted in Hebrews, the motto of the apocalyptists of the second generation,[1] is happily echoed and reinterpreted. Jesus is coming again, *in a little while,* not on the clouds, but in the hearts of believers.

> "I will not leave you forlorn; I am coming to you. A little while longer and the world will see me no more; but you will see me because I am living and you will be living too. . . . If anyone loves me he will obey my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and take up our abode with him. . . . Yet—I am telling you the truth—my going is for your good. If I do not depart, the Helper will not come to you; whereas if I go, I will send him to you. . . . In a little while, you will behold me no longer; then, after a little, you shall see me. . . . Just now you are in sorrow, but I shall see you again and your heart will rejoice—with a joy that no one can take form you."[2]

Only the spiritual Christ who is always to be present in the world can say, "Remain in me, as I remain in you."[3] Just as in Ro. 8 Paul speaks of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and Christ as one and the same, so in the Fourth Gospel the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and Christ Himself are one. To the Christian of 110 A. D. who read the Gospel of John, Christ had already come in the Holy Spirit, the Helper, the Comforter. He needed no longer to wait "a little while." The promised advent had taken place. He could well have sung,

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[1] See above, pp. 186 f.

[2] John 14:18 f., 23; 16:7, 16, 22.

[3] John 15:4.

"I ask no dream, no prophet-ecstasies,
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,
No angel-visitant, no opening skies;
But take the dimness of my soul away."

Although occasionally the customary Synoptic language of the judgment and the last day creeps into John's mind, he is equally clear in substituting a spiritual judgment for the spectacular one usually deduced from the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew.

> "God did not send his Son into the world to pass sentence on it, but to save the world by him. He who believes in him is not sentenced; he who will not believe is sentenced already, for having refused to believe in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the sentence of condemnation, that the Light has entered the world and yet men have preferred darkness to light. . . . Now is this world to be judged; now the Prince of this world will be expelled. . . . The Prince of this world has been judged."[1]

The divine judgment is not external, but internal; it is not technical, but moral; it is not forensic, but natural; it is not future, but present.

This interpretation of the judgment is only possibly because of a new, spiritual interpretation of the messianic victory over the powers of evil. In Jesus' death he had cast out the Prince of this world and drawn all men away from their former allegiance to evil and transferred it to himself. "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it bears rich fruit."[2]

According to the Fourth Gospel the disciple shall indeed suffer persecution.

> "Remember what I told you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.'

[1] 3:17 ff.; 12:31; 16:11.
[2] John 12:24.

> If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they hold to my word, they will hold to yours.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> They will excommunicate you; indeed the time is coming when anyone who kills you will imagine he is performing a service to God. . . . Truly, truly, I tell you, you will be wailing and lamenting while the world is rejoicing; you will be sorrowful, but then your sorrow will be changed into joy. . . . In the world you have trouble, but courage! I have conquered the world."[1]

Here is no picture of progressive deterioration. Here is no moral or spiritual pessimism. Jesus' very death means the overthrow of Satan and all his hosts. For it makes possible the coming of the Helper, the Spirit of truth, who will guide the disciple into all truth and convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. So far from the world growing worse, "he who believes in me will do the very deeds that I do, and still greater deeds than these . . . Ask whatever you like and you shall have it. . . . It is I who have chosen you, appointing you to go and bear fruit—fruit that lasts."[2] Here no limits are set to the power of God. The victory has been won by the death and resurrection of Christ, as by a tremendous preliminary fire of artillery. It only remains for the church to move forward to clear out the already fleeing enemy and possess and "consolidate" the positions which the hostile forces evacuate as it advances. Christ could say, "My kingdom is not of this world," else "would my servants fight." Fighting, the enforcement of law, any external force can never bring in the kingdom of God. Christ's kingdom is not *of* this world because it is to be brought in, not by physical or material means, but by spiritual forces working in and through the hearts of men. Yet it is *in* the world. The disciples are not to

[1] 15:20; 16:2, 20, 33.

[2] 14:12; 15:7, 16.

be taken out of the world but to be saved from its evil.[1]

This is a most practical doctrine. It is clear that it is but a consistent development of the Pauline idea of the victorious life in Christ, made possible by a faith that bears the fruits of the Spirit, the social fruits of "love, joy, peace, good temper, kindliness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control."[2] Paul says, "The victory is ours, thank God! He maketh it ours by our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . For he must reign until all his foes are put under his feet."[3] It is equally clear that both Paul and John have their footing squarely on the teaching of their Master and ours, who taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come," which, being interpreted, means, "Thy will be done," not in heaven, but "on earth as it is in heaven." By the seal of his approval Jesus immortalized the spirit and message of the Old Testament prophet who said,

> "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. . . . If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."[4]

Paul's living and thinking explicitly and that of the Fourth Evangelist implicitly center around the ideal of Jesus, heart religion bearing fruit in social righteousness.

The Gentile physician Luke more than any other New Testament writer interprets for us this social ideal of Jesus. He knew and could report sympathetically the apocalyptic spirit of the first Christians. His historical sense was too fine for him to omit such primitive traits. His philosophical training was not sufficient for him to be aware of the essential inconsistency of his own position. But his sense of social need and his faith that

[1] 17:15.
[2] Gal. 5:23.
[3] I Co. 15:57, 25.
[4] Is. 1:16-19.

the gospel of Jesus could meet that need were so overpowering that he collected and added to his story of Jesus just those elements which have made his work *par excellence* the "social gospel."

In his version of the Markan apocalypse Luke goes far beyond Matthew in distinguishing the fall of Jerusalem from the end of the world. The latter he puts off into the far distant future, "till the period of the Gentiles expires,"[1] thus showing that he had no hope of an immediate advent. He makes the most of the social dissatisfaction that expressed itself in apocalyptic literature, for example, in the idea of the overthrow of the mighty and the exaltation of the poor, found in the songs of his first chapter. His version of the Beatitudes shows emphatically where his sympathies are. The inaugural address at Nazareth breathes the same atmosphere. Moreover, the messianic victory is already won, Satan has fallen as lightning from heaven. Accordingly the kingdom is here,[2] the new age when the weak and downtrodden get their rights has already begun.[3] Thus plainly Luke breathes the atmosphere of the prophets, reporting the eschatological hopes of early Christianity without sharing them and reproducing its apocalyptic atmosphere without being touched by its fanaticism. Paul with his tense messianic expectation, but equally vivid sense of the social and spiritual values of the gospel, Luke with the latter fully maintained, but the former paling, and the Fourth Gospel with the eschatological emphasis evanescent, but the practical and mystical filling the picture, are three stages in the progressive approach of Christianity to the essential faith of its founder.[4]

[1] 21:24.

[2] 17:21.

[3] 10:17-24.

[4] Unfortunately in the Fourth Gospel the mystical displaces the social, and for the latter emphasis we must turn to Paul and his "beloved physician."

III. The Values of Premillennialism Conserved in the Social-Spiritual View

Since there is so much in apocalypticism, ancient and modern, that is weak and even puerile, why has an overruling providence allowed it such a prominent place in the writings of our faith, or, to put it differently, how does it come that through all the centuries it has kept such a strong grip on some of the best and most sincere saints, first of Judaism and then of Christianity? The answer is plain and must be spoken with all emphasis: Because there is so much in it that satisfies the deepest needs of the human heart. And that is another way of saying that it contains certain great fundamental truths. The weaknesses to which we have called attention[1] are the rough outside burr that hides the rich kernel within. It is man's lot to see "the baffling reflections in a mirror," not to look directly upon the glory of truth. Why does God allow us to go on groping for the truth instead of clearly revealing it to us? Why did he suffer the Hebrews to go on century after century with the priesthood and sacrifices and ritual of the Old Testament? The ready answer, only partially satisfactory, is, because the fulness of the time had not yet come, the world was not yet ready for Jesus. Why has he suffered the greater part of the world to go on to this day without that life-giving evangel? We cannot answer fully such questions, but the solutions lie somewhere in the same region. Our eyes do not like the glaring white and black of an overexposed photograph. Our minds are not capable of grasping truth cleanly and squarely and completely separating it from the false. Except in such little matters as two and two make four, falsehood is always mixed with our truth. The Old Testament religion was imperfect and inadequate, but the Law was a pedagogue to lead men to Christ.

[1] See above, pp. 194-200.

Non-Christian religions are imperfect and inadequate, but they so meet the needs as to nourish the religious life and keep it alive till a better gospel comes. So Premillennialism has kept alive vital truths.

> "I say that man was made to grow, not stop;
> That help, he needed once, and needs no more,
> Having grown but an inch by, is withdrawn:
> For he hath new needs, and new helps to these.
> This imports solely, man should mount on each
> New height in view; the help whereby he mounts,
> The ladder-rung his foot has left, may fall,
> Since all things suffer change save God the Truth.
> Man apprehends him newly at each stage
> Whereat earth's ladder drops, its service done.
> . . . . . .
> I say, that as the babe, you feed awhile,
> Becomes a boy and fit to feed himself,
> So, minds at first must be spoon-fed with truth:
> When they can eat, babe's nurture is withdrawn."

What then are the values which apocalypticism has preserved? A recent writer has characterized the thought of Jesus with regard to the future as "transmuted eschatology.[1] We need today a transmuted apocalypticism. The vital hopefulness, the inspiring enthusiasm, the feeling of tension that made great undertakings possible, all these qualities in the early church, which were due largely to its expectation of the speedy return of Christ in power, we need today.

We need the driving power of Premillennialism. The comparatively small group of Premillennialists in the orthodox and Adventist churches is probably as vigorous and zealous as any corresponding number of their opponents. It may be objected that their zeal is not according to knowledge, and in fact that it seems to require a sort of fanaticism in one's make-up to prepare him to swallow the manifest absurdities of parts of the premil-

[1] See above, p. 149.

lennial scheme. It is possibly true that the same extreme temper that opens his mind to his peculiar doctrine makes him zealous both as a propagandist and as a Christian. At the same time the fact must not be overlooked, nor by any partisanship obscured, that the premillennial view has contributed tremendously to Christian energy and activity along its chosen lines. Particularly is it to be noted that Premillennialism is the doctrine of many outstanding evangelists, such as "Billy" Sunday, J. Wilbur Chapman, R. A. Torrey, D. W. Potter, L. W. Munhall, A. J. Gordon and Dwight L. Moody.[1] Postmillennialism entirely lacks this driving power. Its very title suggests the postponement of Christ's coming and of any accounting until some far-off epoch. The name and the doctrine as well should, therefore, be abandoned, not only for scientific, but also for practical reasons. It lays emphasis on the negative side of the doctrine of Christ's coming, and, accordingly, falls far below the positive doctrine preached by the Premillennialist.

We need the tension of apocalypticism. The arrow will fly to its mark only if the bow is strung. The violin will speak only if the strings be drawn to the right tension. The steel that protects the homes and the rights of democracy must be properly tempered. The army that wins must have an immutable *esprit de corps,* an indomitable morale. The victorious attack must be made under the stimulus of high excitement. Every man should "live continually in the presence of the best, with ready response," to use a favorite phrase of President Henry Churchill King. The great man is one who works nor-

[1] See above, p. 142. The Premillennialist rightly claims to walk in most excellent company, with Luther, Melanchthon, Milton, Burnett, Isaac Newton, Watts, Charles Wesley, Toplady, and a host of others. See W. E. B. (Blackstone), *Jesus Is Coming* (3rd rev.), p. 41. W. E. B. fails completely in discussing "Work," *op. cit.,* p. 119. Evangelism in the sense of winning the individual, not social evangelism or social service, is the kind of work to which the Premillennialist chiefly gives himself.

mally under high tension.[1] Great deeds are normally performed under abnormal conditions. Occasional relaxation is necessary, but most men break under the strain of minor worries, a strain that would be removed if the soul were centered on some great task, if it were lost in a great enthusiasm. This the early Christians had because of the apocalyptic faith. A sense of the imminence of tremendous changes, the belief that all things should not go on as they had from the foundation of the world, the consciousness of living in the immediate presence of another world, the momentary expectation of the coming of the Master on the clouds to judge and transform the present world order, a worldwide vision, *sub specie aeternitatis,* all this lifted the early Christians out of themselves and made them capable of efforts and endurance that without such inspiration would have been completely impossible. It made different men of them. Galilean peasants, Syrian peddlers, and Greek slaves became the heralds of a new age, the leaders of a new social movement, largely because they felt themselves to be living at the end of the age; under such extraordinary conditions they must lead extraordinary lives.

> "Now as all things are thus to be dissolved, what holy and pious men ought you to be in your behavior, you who expect and hasten the advent of the Day of God, which dissolves the heavens in fire and makes the stars blaze and melt."[2]

Granted the practical efficiency, the "driving power" of the apocalyptic faith, it becomes necessary to seek for the fundamental motives which it uses. What are the great truths underneath the surface which have made it appeal so powerfully to some of the greatest Christian leaders in ancient and modern times? In what does its

[1] See the interesting discussion of Jesus' greatness by G. Stanley Hall, *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology* (New York, 1917), II 432 ff.

[2] II Pt. 3:11 f.

"driving power" lie, and how may it be conserved in a saner view of divine providence?

The social-spiritual view eliminates the objectionable features of apocalypticism, its pessimism, its determinism, its externalism, and its literalism. It preserves the valuable elements, often in a form which enhances their appeal and power. For a coming of the messiah on the clouds at the end of the age it puts a present and continual coming of the eternal, personal, yet imminent Christ in the hearts of believers and the institutions of society. For the final "great assize" it puts a present judgment. For an eventual vindication of righteousness from without the world and man it puts a gradual and progressive victory of the right due to its own inherent power. It retains all the social dissatisfaction and wistful longing for a better era that marked ancient apocalypticism, but it looks for social regeneration through the operation of the spiritual forces which God has implanted and directs within the individual and society. The social-spiritual view does not undervalue the apocalyptic expectation of catastrophic judgment, but reads its great truth into a saner view of social evolution. From the mountain top of its high experience with God it reads his presence and his reign in a thousand signs of the times. Its interpretation of social and spiritual relationships puts the soul in the presence of the highest and most powerful motives and ideals of service. The values of the apocalyptic, or premillennial, worldview which the social-spiritual faith and hope conserve require but a brief exposition.

In practice the Premillennialist usually, no doubt, makes much of communion with Christ here and now as a preparation for his future coming. But the necessary consequence of emphasis on the coming with the clouds is to weaken the sense of fellowship with the present Christ. Professor E. F. Scott states the difficulty clearly:

> "It was not possible for Paul, as for the Fourth Evangelist, to assume a present and immediate fellowship between the exalted Christ and the believer. In accordance with his Apocalyptic idea of the Parousia, he conceived of the manifestation of Christ as still in the future. A time would come when His people would be received into His presence, but their communion as yet was not directly with Him, but with the Spirit which was in His stead. This idea of the Spirit as the 'earnest' of what will be hereafter, is in some respects the key to the whole doctrine as it appears in Paul. He realized that the Christian life was in its essence a fellowship in Christ, and yet, by the belief which he shared with the primitive Church, he was obliged to think of this fellowship as still future."[1]

This difficulty which Professor Scott points out inheres still more strongly in any view which differentiates between Christ and the Spirit in an unscriptural fashion, as so many moderns do, but as Paul did not.[2] It is increased by emphasis on the physical appearance of Christ at the last day. Christ is gone away, he has left his own "orphans" until he comes again. And the "little while" of the promise has become two thousand years.

If, on the contrary, we take the view that the "little while" was only the interval between the death and resurrection, then Christ is still with us all the time.

> "Where is your Lord?
> Seated at God's right hand,
> Captain of Heaven's host,
> Directing campaigns grand
> On some removed coast
> Of Eternity's vast sea—
> So far above
> Man's highest love
> He cannot reached be?

[1] *Fourth Gospel*, pp. 329 f.
[2] Cp. Ro. 8:9-11.

Where is your Lord?
At God's right hand in sooth:
Where'er his servants brave
Are fighting for the truth,
That all the world may have
His larger life. 'Tis here
The Christ is found:
His accents sound
Within your soul—so near!

Where is your Lord?
Within the daily round
Of duty. God's command
For you just now's the sound
Of the Master's voice. Stand
To your hard task! Be true
To your ideal!
God's will's the real—
Your Lord dwells there for you."

To feel that Christ is here, that he is leading the hosts of righteousness to ultimate victory, that "he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet" means comfort for the hour of trial and strength for the hour of battle. It is a vital, victorious faith to believe that the spiritual Christ has never left the world, and that more and more he is being enthroned in the souls of men and the institutions of society.

The practical value of the proclamation of the imminence of the judgment day is obvious. One who has to be ready momentarily for the striking of the final balance is likely to be careful in his accounts. One will be cautious in drawing his cheques if he remembers that all accounts are balanced daily and that overdrafts are never allowed. To be sure, religion that is based on fear is of a very low type. But the pedagogical value of fear is to be recognized; we are reacting from the sentimentality that fears to mention retribution. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," is a law written in the

heart of the universe. The ethical value of the vivid picture of the "Great Assize," as it is drawn by Jesus, cannot be realized at the present time from a non-literalistic interpretation mainly because of the necessity of guarding against the undue literalism of both Pre- and Post-millennialism.[1] With the rapid spread of saner views of interpretation that difficulty will disappear. The power of the Johannine idea of present judgment to move all but the grossest minds cannot be denied. History, physiology, psychology, in fact every science that touches man, proclaims aloud the truth that the soul's verdict is now being written moment by moment, not by recording angels in heavenly books, but by each man himself on the fleshy tablets of his own heart, and that inevitable judgment is written just as ineradicably into the fiber of a nation or a church or a labor union as it is on the individual soul. For individuals and social groups alike, "now is the judgment of this world." For the spectacular judgment day we have only a few obviously rhetorical passages of Scripture and certain remote analogies. For the truth that every day is a day of judgment we have the inner spirit of the teachings of the prophets and Jesus and a thousand facts and apposite analogies all through the realm of nature. It is a spiritual truth, to be spiritually apprehended, and, therefore, all the more powerful when once it is written on a man's heart. Above all it is a vital and not a mechanical doctrine. Judgment is not inflicted from without, but from within. God, the wisest of all fathers, has so ordered the universe that somehow, sometime, sin brings its own punishment, with no accuser, no judge, no jury, to stand between the naked soul and its guilt. Surely the teacher, the preacher, and

[1] John Wesley's remarkable sermon on "The Great Assize" (No. xv), strong as it is, is an excellent illustration of the weakness of a literalistic Postmillennialism. He surely could have made a much stronger impression and have been more consistent if he had urged the imminence of the day of doom.

the evangelist can ask for no more practical and powerful doctrine.

If Premillennialism, following the example of its predecessors, preprophetic Hebrew and postprophetic Jewish apocalypticism, somewhat overdoes the idea of the triumph of God's own people, it is perfectly right in insisting on the ultimate vindication of righteousness.

> "Represent it to ourselves how we may, the essentially ethical character of Christianity demands the final victory for righteousness. . . . At the back of the doctrine of the Second Advent lies the conviction that it is not ethical to assume that good and evil will continue forever balancing one another. A permanent dualism is not completely ethical. A God of Righteousness means that some day righteousness will prevail as a world order. And the victory must be where the battle is."[1]

This admirable statement, by an Australian student of eschatology, would no doubt meet the approval of most Adventists. The Premillennialist insists on the vindication of righteousness, and that on this earth "where the battle is." But in his view that vindication is to come by an interference from without. God must step in and "scrap" this present world order, before righteousness can win. The rules of war must be changed in the midst of the conflict, so as to give righteousness the advantage. The second advent is the *deus ex machina* which accomplishes the desired result. Such a hope makes it easier to believe in the vindication of the right, but it misses the point. It is not a real vindication. Our souls demand that right shall prevail because it is right, because God is in it, not because God is back of it, to help out in the final struggle. If the victory is to be won where the

[1] The Rev. R. G. Macintyre, B.D., professor of Systematic Theology in St. Andrews College (University of Sydney), "The Second Advent: The Fact of It," in *Expository Times* XXVIII 2 (Nov., 1916), 90. The writer in an effort to preserve the truth of the idea of world catastrophe, greaty confuses his case, as it seems to me.

battle is, it must be in this present world order, with the laws of society and of the soul just what they are now. A spiritual view of the coming of the kingdom demands greater faith, for, though right has been winning since history began, evil is a hydra-headed monster, and the ultimate victory is not yet in sight. We have, indeed, no assurance that the battle will ever cease, for every stage in the development of the individual and the race has its own difficulties, and no real flesh and blood saint ever escaped the clutches of temptation. We cannot even prove that death will mean the end of effort and achievement. All analogies from our present life would suggest rather the contrary. Real existence seems to involve effort; growth comes from exercise; life implies activity. If the millennium, if heaven itself means nothing more to do, no further advances to make, no problems to solve, no difficulties to overcome, no victories to win, it fades into a nirvana. Righteousness is to be vindicated in triumphant conflict. Who would not pray for "strength for the fight," rather than to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease"? The moral value of such a doctrine is unimpeachable. A present, progressive judgment, a present, progressive vindication of righteousness, these are doctrines to live by.

> "Thy saints in all this glorious war
> Shall conquer, though they die:
> They see the triumph from afar,
> By faith they bring it nigh."

A present, progressive judgment of evil and vindication of righteousness mean a gradual but complete social regeneration. The social implications of apocalypticism have often been overlooked. It has been forgotten that, in its bitter protest against social wrongs, it was the true and only successor of prophetism. It has been assumed that the kingdom of heaven meant a kingdom in heaven. As Professor Percy Gardner has truly said, "The per-

sistent belief of the Jews in a coming reign of righteousness on earth, though it had in it much of materialism, also contained the germs of progress."[1] A very considerable group of Christians, perhaps the majority, inherited this materialistic faith from the Jews. Its repeated disappointment may, as Professor Gardner suggests, have contributed to the otherworldliness that later characterized the church. But from the first there had been those who, like Paul and the author of IV Ezra, believed their citizenship was in heaven, and that flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of God. Even this sublimated messianic hope has its social implications. It grew out of complete dissatisfaction with the present social and world order. By contrast it might intensify the blackness of social wrongs under which men suffer during this present age.

Yet the practical falsity of otherworldliness lies in the fact that, by its promises of future joy when life is done, it tends to deaden the soul's sensitiveness to present evils.

"A tent or a cottage—
Why should I care?
They're building a mansion
For me over there."

Sufficient and wholesome food for the children of poor and rich alike will not be a burning issue for one whose eyes are fixed on

"Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest."

We are right in passing back over the otherworldliness of the later church to the practical social ideals of Paul, Jesus, and the great Hebrew prophets of righteousness. However much Paul may have longed for the "building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," he seems never to have lost touch with life, nor to have failed to see the measures necessary to insure

[1] *Exploratio Evangelica*, p. 287.

the practice of the righteousness of the kingdom among his converts. The practicability of the social principles of Jesus cannot be too much emphasized. Jesus' kingdom was not of this world in its principles and methods. Love, not selfishness, was to rule it; it was to come by the power of the Spirit, not by force. But it was to come on the earth. The victory must be won where the battle is.

This social evaluation of the advent of the Spirit leads to a revaluation of the historical applications of apocalypticism. According to the apocalyptic view regeneration can come only after catastrophe. The popular conception of evolution made the catastrophic seem entirely out of place, for it supposed that science knows only a gradual, almost imperceptible advance in nature and history. More mature study has shown that evolution means nothing of the kind. In nature, in the individual soul, and in society, to quote Mr. Streeter,

> "the greatest advances are frequently *per saltum*. They occur in epochs or moments of crisis, as in the Apocalyptic parable of 'the Day of the Lord.' The Reformation, the French Revolution, or the rebirth of the Far East in our own time, are conspicuous examples, but in a measure this is no less true of nearly all considerable movements. Such crises, no doubt, are the result of causes which can to some extent be traced, and have been prepared for by a slow and gradual development. But in their realization they are catastrophic, and take even the wisest by surprise."[1]

In the individual, development comes through the resolution into order of the chaos due to a problematic situation. Adolescence is particularly the period of catastrophic evolution; out of its "storm and stress" there come reorganization and regeneration of the powers and ideals.

[1] Chapter on "The Historic Christ," in *Foundations: A Statement of Christian Belief in Terms of Modern Thought.* By Seven Oxford Men (London, 1913), pp. 120 f.

Likewise in social groups and in the race, it requires the purifying fires of difficulty and disaster to prepare for the development of larger life. Catastrophes of earthquake, fire, and flood, with all the suffering they entail, not infrequently bring a train of economic, social, and moral advances, as the San Francisco disaster wiped out the old Chinatown.

Apocalypticism recognized all this in its doctrine of catastrophic judgment. The ancient prophets of Israel tried to interpret the sufferings of their nation as a divine chastisement for her sins. Nothing can be clearer than that Second Isaiah understood that the day of Yahweh was past, and that, as a result, the nation could now hope for the glorious regeneration, the new age which had been so long promised by his predecessors.[1] Allowing for the oriental extravagance of the prophet's language, we cannot but regard him as the precursor of the social-spiritual view of apocalypticism. When a people seems to have received double for all her sins, but in some measure or in some part has remained faithful to the truth, then the way is prepared for the coming of the Lord.

When one watches the incoming tide, the waves seem often for a time to fall back and back, until one might suppose the highest point had been reached and the ebb had begun. But unexpectedly a great wave gathers the falling waters and hurls them far beyond any point yet reached. So out of defeat and despair victory is born. The rising tide of righteousness seems often to be receding, but it is not so. Out of the very break-up of the social fabric new forces come to light which carry us on to greater achievements. Whereas the apocalyptic view is thoroughly mechanical, this interpretation of the facts welds the catastrophic and the so-called normal into an organic universe. Instead of proclaiming that Jesus is coming at some definite or indefinite date in the future,

[1] See above, pp. 73 f., 89 f.

it cries, "The kingdom of God is at hand," the day of the Lord is upon us. Quit you like men, be strong.

Men say rightly that the twentieth century began in 1914. However deeply one may feel that war is of the Devil, one cannot but admit that some wars at least have indirectly hastened the coming of the kingdom. Our Spanish War, touched off by a mean and utterly unchristian spirit of revenge, with its watchword, "Remember the Maine," has worked miracles, not only for the social and moral improvement of our island possessions, but for the broadening of our own national ideals of service. The Japanese-Russian War, along with unfortunate results, helped marvellously in opening up the Orient to western influences, including Christian missions. The recent world war, though its destructiveness has been unparalleled, not only in physical, but in social and moral matters, is even now creating new opportunities for spreading the kingdom. The early Christians thought that the Jewish war and the destruction of Jerusalem involved the final judgment and the immediate coming of the kingdom of God. And so it did in a sense much truer than they dreamed. It revealed the inner nature of the materialistic, mechanical type of apocalyptic hope which drove the Jews into revolt against Rome; it eventually furthered the progress of spiritual religion among both Jews and Christians by divorcing them from the Holy City and the forms of Temple worship. So, if the recent war reveals to the pacifists that their failure was due to lack of practical organization and to trust in commerce and the progress of civilization rather than in the higher spiritual motives, if it convinces the Christian world that it has been playing at its task instead of going up to possess the land, it will have worked a purifying judgment of the most far-reaching consequences and will have tremendously hastened the coming of the reign of God.

"The king is dead; long live the king." One crisis

is past, another is upon us. The perils of peace are greater than the perils of war.

> "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
> In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
> Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
> Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
> And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.
> . . . . . .
> Backward look across the ages and the beacon-moments see,
> That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut through Oblivion's sea;
> Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry
> Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers, from whose feet earth's chaff must fly;
> Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath passed by."

When the armistice was signed the morale of armies and nations began to ebb away, and the subsiding flood of high enthusiasm and noble purpose has left exposed all the old rottenness of private greed and class selfishness and political partisanship and national narrowness. Unless as individuals and social groups, churches, parties, classes, and nations, we can meet the strain of social reorganization, new catastrophes impend. God's judgments are not reserved till some uncertain future; they are now upon us.

All the prophets, great and small, from Amos to Jesus, were continually crying out to men to heed the signs of the times. No feature of apocalypticism has been more misused by modern Adventism and Premillennialism. Yet there is tremendous truth behind it. The apocalyptist deals

almost exclusively in catastrophic signs of the times. Jesus pointed to the happy signs, the rainbow of promise. In his victory over the powers of evil he saw evidence that the kingdom was already in the world. "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." Political or physical progress that furthers the interests of society, the advances of medicine, sanitation, housing, the expansion of commerce, the conquest of the earth, the sea, and the air that has made it possible to fulfil the command to go and disciple all nations, the overthrow of slavery, the progress of temperance, all these are signs, not that the kingdom is soon to come, but that it is already here. They are not the kingdom, for it is not meat and drink; it is a matter of the heart. But they are the outward evidences and expressions, the fruits of its coming. And those who make light of such fruits of the Spirit are in grave danger of denying the Spirit and the power of God. And so, in clouds and sunshine, we read the signs of the coming of the time when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

> "The summits of certain mountains are seen only at rare moments when, their cloud-cap rolled away, they stand out stark and clear. So in ordinary life ultimate values and eternal issues are normally obscured by minor duties, petty cares, and small ambitions; at the bedside of a dying man the cloud is often lifted. In virtue of the eschatological hope our Lord and His first disciples found themselves standing, as it were, at the bedside of a dying world. Thus for a whole generation the cloud of lesser interests was rolled away, and ultimate values and eternal issues stood out before them stark and clear, as never before or since in the history of our race."

This excellent evaluation of early Christian apocalypticism by Mr. Streeter[1] puts at once before us one of the

[1] *Foundations*, pp. 119 f.

strongest points in the premillennial faith. I never understood the situation of San Francisco and the cities around the Bay until I looked down upon them from the hills of Marin County. Travel, vacations, and similar relaxations tone us up partly because they take us out of the routine, away from the trivial round of care, and enable us to see our lives in perspective, to get a sense of proportions. How much more does a great, soul-shaking experience, a great love, a great loss, a great enthusiasm, shatter the deadening conventions and fond falsehoods that have imprisoned the spirit and set it free to see life true and whole! How many soldiers "found themselves" at the front under fire! Like any permanent passion, a vital belief in the imminence of the judgment and the second advent acts as a corrective to wrong estimates of present values. It continually lifts the soul out of itself and its small affairs and sets it on a mountain top from which it can see life as heaven sees it. With such a faith it is easier to value as they really are property and social ambitions and dress and the hundred little things that occupy the minds of most men and women. This releases vast resources of energy for Christian service and accounts in large measure for the "driving power" of premillennial doctrine.

But we have noted how the premillennial mountain top gives only a partial and one-sided view of life. On the other hand, a belief in a present judgment, a faith, not in the imminence of a physically visible Messiah on the clouds, but in the immanence of a spiritual Christ coming in the hearts of men and in the relationships of society, a faith in the power of God to make one victor in the face of apparent defeat, a faith that in the quiet processes of spring time and harvest and in the catastrophic leaps of thunderstorm and earthquake the spiritual forces of the universe are slowly working out the present and ultimate triumph of righteousness, this sends one out with that sanity of outlook, that wholesomeness of hope,

and that tirelessness of endeavor which are slowly winning the world to acknowledge him who reigns. A social-spiritual apocalypticism truly sees the world *sub specie aeternatatis.*

The tension of apocalypticism is more than reproduced by the social-spiritual view. We have every reason to feel the zeal of Adventism and Premillennialism, but turned into social action. We have every reason to feel down to the bottom of our hearts that "now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation." Indeed we have tenfold more reason for tensity of interest and effort than the man who holds the apocalyptic faith. The archangel's trumpet that Paul expected would strike all ears whether they listened or not. Trumpets all around us are proclaiming the presence of the Lord, and we hear them not; his signs are flaming in our skies, but we see them not; for our ears are dull and our eyes are heavy. "If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things that belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Is not this generation "eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage," unaware that the days of the Son of man are upon it? We are forever vainly repeating, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Only as we give every ounce of our strength to fulfilling our prayers can we really pray.

If we feel to the depths of our hearts that the Master has come, that he is in our world, leading the fight for the kingdom, and that we have to give the last drop of blood to win the objective he has placed before us, that this is the day of the Lord for our generation, can we not work under a frictionless tension that will enable us to realize the fulness of our capabilities? The Premillennialist feels the urgency of winning souls. We have every reason to feel it, for the night cometh when no man can work, and a still greater enthusiasm should fire the heart of him who recognizes his obligation to try to save men, not only for their own sake, but also for

the sake of society, for the fellowship of the kingdom. The tension that comes from the sense of great tasks should be supplemented by that of great expectations. There is not only

> ". . . one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

Divine events, miraculous transformations, are happening all around us. He that cometh is coming, and he does not tarry. The present tense is the language of faith.

I come back to the question with which we began:

> "Watchman, tell us of the night,
> What its signs of promise are.
> Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height
> See the glory-beaming star!"

We acknowledge the crudities of the visions of the ancient prophets and apocalyptists of Israel, but let us not despise their faith.

> "New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth."

We cannot

> ". . . attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key."

But, profiting by the mistakes and successes of the past we can make a new key for our future. And from the experience of the past we can learn that the one key that will open the world to us is faith in a living Christ. We have not lost God out of our world. Science finds spiritual forces imponderable, but it can not deny their reality. History and nature are not less under Providence because they are under law. The reign of law is the reign of God. As we come to know it better the natural is not less supernatural. A sane historical interpretation of the basic elements of apocalypticism leaves us but confirmed in our faith that God reigns; our hope that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess him Lord; and our passion to

serve until all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

"Loud mockers in the roaring street
Say: Christ is crucified again,
Twice pierced His gospel-bearing feet,
Twice broken His great heart in vain

I hear and to myself I smile,
For Christ talks with me all the while.

No angel now to roll the stone
From off his unawaking sleep,
In vain shall Mary watch alone,
In vain the soldiers vigil keep.

Yet while they deem my Lord is dead
My eyes are on his shining head.

'No more unto the stubborn heart,
With gentle knocking shall he plead,
No more the mystic pity start,
For Christ twice dead is dead indeed!'

So in the street I hear men say
Yet Christ is with me all the day."[1]

[1] Richard Le Gallienne.

CHRONOLIGICAL TABLE

c.—*circa* (about); p.—*post* (after).

c. 1200	Exodus
xi. cent.	Song of Deborah
c. 1050-937	United Kingdom
937-721	Divided Kingdom
x-viii. cent.	Earliest histories, J and E
782-738	Uzziah, king of Judah
781-740	Jeroboam II, king of Israel
c. 745	Amos
c. 740	Hosea
738-p. 700	Isaiah
c. 725-700	Micah
722-1	Fall of Samaria
c. 650	Deuteronomy (in the main)
c. 627	Zephaniah
627-580	Jeremiah
c. 610	Nahum
c. 600	Habakkuk
597	First Captivity
592-586	Ezekiel 1-32 (in the main)
586	Fall of Jerusalem; second Captivity
586-570	Ezekiel 33-48 (in the main)
p. 586	Lamentations: Obadiah; Jeremiah 30-33 (?)
549	Beginning of Cyrus' conquests Isaiah 13-14; Jeremiah 50-51
538	Cyrus in Babylon First return of Exiles Isaiah 40-55
521	Insurrections in Persian Empire; suicide of Cambyses
520	Temple begun at Jerusalem Haggai; Zechariah 1-8; messianic hopes aroused

516	Temple completed; Empire reorganized
	Isaiah 56-66
	Malachi
458	Return of Ezra
445	Return of Nehemiah; walls of Jerusalem rebuilt
444	Law, as in Pentateuch, accepted; beginning of canon
400	Anabasis
	Joel
	Chronicles: Ezra-Nehemiah
	Jonah; Ruth
332	Alexander; beginning of Greek period
	Isaiah 24-27 (? See below)
	Zechariah 9-14 (? See below)
320-198	Ptolemies and Seleucids struggle to control Palestine
	Job; Ecclesiastes
	Close of prophetic canon
198	Antiochus III conquers Palestine
c. 180	Jesus, son of Sirach
176	Antiochus IV Epiphanes
170	Temple plundered
168	Temple desecrated; Maccabean revolt
	Book of Noah; I Enoch 6-36 (Before 166)
c. 166	I Enoch 83-90
165	Temple rededicated
	Daniel; Isaiah 33
161	Death of Judas
161-143	Jonathan
	Zechariah 12-14 (?)
143-135	Simon
	Sibylline Oracles III (in the main) (before 140)
135-105	John Hyrcanus I
	Isaiah 24-27 (?); 34-35 (?)
	I Enoch 72-82; Book of Jubilees
	Testaments of XII Patriarchs
105-104	Aristobulus
104-78	Alexander Jannaeus
	I Enoch 1-5; 91-104 (Before 95)

78-69	Alexandra
69-63	Struggles of John Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus
	I Enoch 37-76 (The Similitudes) (Before 64)
70-40	Psalms of Solomon
63	Conquest of Palestine by Pompey
60-40	Revision of Testaments of XII Patriarchs
40	Inroad of Parthians
39-4	Herod the Great
	Birth of Jesus (Between 8 and 4 B. C.)
4 B. C.	Accession of the sons of Herod
4 B. C.-7 A. D.	Assumption of Moses(?)
6 A. D.	Judea a Roman province
	Revolt of Judas the Galilean and Saddoc the Pharisee
c. 26-28	Messianic prophecies of John the Baptist
c. 28-30	Ministry of Jesus
	Increasing restiveness of Jews
44	Revolt of Theudas
40-70	Parts of IV Ezra and II Baruch written
40-60	Collection of Sayings of Jesus (Q)
50-62	Literary activity of Paul
52-66	Frequent outbreaks in Palestine
	Markan "fly-sheet"
50-70	Gospel of Mark
64	Burning of Rome; Neronian persecution
c. 65	I Peter
66	Outbreak of Jewish War
70	Fall of Jerusalem
p. 70	Apocalypse of (II) Baruch
75-79	Josephus writes *Jewish War*
c. 80	Gospel of Matthew
80-100	Apocalypse of (IV) Ezra
	Sibylline Oracles IV
	Pastoral Epistles (present form)
90	Council of Jamnia; close of O. T. canon
90-100	Epistle of James
	Epistle to Hebrews
	I Clement to Corinthians
93	Josephus writes *Antiquities*

95	Domitianic persecution Book of Revelation
p. 100	Gospel and epistles of John
100-125	Jude (90-100?)
c. 130	Didache
125-150	II Peter; Apocalypse of Peter

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